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New York

President:	Mr. Llorentty Soliz	(Bolivia (Plurinational State of))
Members:	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	Ethiopia	Ms. Guadey
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Italy	Mr. Lambertini
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	Ukraine	Mr. Shutenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Ms. Tachco
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli

Agenda

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Israel, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, the Republic of Korea, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Viet Nam to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and Mr. Joseph Ballard, senior officer of the Office of Strategy and Policy, Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. João Vale de Almeida, Head of Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

I propose that the Council invite the Permanent Observer of the Observer State of the Holy See to the United Nations to participate in this meeting, in accordance with the provisional rules of procedure and the previous practice in this regard.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I now give the floor to Ms. Nakamitsu.

Ms. Nakamitsu: Mr. President, I thank you very much for having convened this important open debate today.

The possibility of non-State actors, including terrorists, acquiring weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) remains a significant threat to global security, and the international community must step up its efforts to ensure that the disastrous scenario of WMD terrorism is avoided.

Since its adoption in 2004, resolution 1540 (2004) has played and continues to play a vital role in international efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and its delivery systems to non-State actors. Substantial progress has been made over the past years by Member States in their efforts to minimize proliferation risks; however, we are increasingly witnessing new and even more complicated threats in this area.

In my very brief remarks today, let me highlight three key issues in our joint efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors.

First, we need to closely examine the emerging nexus between rapidly advancing technologies and weapons of mass destruction in the globalized and connected world, and identify actions to grapple with its impact on non-proliferation. While globalization obviously brings new opportunities for economic growth and development around the world, it also facilitates the rapid movement of materials, technologies and the latest discoveries in science and technology, as well as of personnel with relevant expertise to use and potentially exploit them with malicious intent.

These risks are ever-changing. Terrorist groups evolve and spread their destructive ideologies in cyberspace, and illicit networks develop new tactics. Technology once perceived as the domain of military experts is now freely available to broader audiences. Non-State actors, including terrorist organizations, will exploit any loophole to obtain these technologies. While there are still significant technical hurdles that terrorist groups need to overcome to effectively use weapons of mass destruction, a growing number of emerging technologies could make that barrier easier to cross.

Several new areas of concern have emerged, such as the use of unmanned aerial vehicles, 3D printers and the exploitation of the so-called dark web. The global reach and anonymity of dark web provides non-State actors with new marketplaces to acquire dual-use equipment and materials. Dual use is further

complicating our efforts to address the risks posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We must keep in mind that many of the technologies, goods and raw materials required for developing weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery derive from legitimate commercial applications that benefit many people. Striking the right balance between commercial opportunity, on the one hand, and our collective security and the need to prevent proliferation, on the other, is important.

This brings me to my second point, which is the importance of international cooperation and the need for continuous and enhanced dialogue with industry as well. The emergence of countless suppliers, along with developments in international trade and sophisticated procurement networks, make concealment easier, allowing illicit trafficking networks to circumvent national and international controls. This means that better international cooperation is essential if we are to prevent terrorist access and use of weapons of mass destruction. In the worst-case scenarios where these weapons are used, seeking accountability will be critical. The international community must uphold the norms that have been established in this area and prosecute those responsible for committing or supporting such acts.

My third point relates to the importance of national capacities in our joint endeavour to prevent proliferation. Recent terrorist attacks have revealed shortcomings in interactions among security agencies, even in countries whose policies are otherwise deeply integrated. Coordination and information-sharing will be vital to overcoming these shortcomings. All Member States should further strengthen export controls, work to prevent any financing of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and ensure the security of sensitive goods and materials.

It is clear that, despite the undeniable success of the past 13 years, we must remain vigilant. Much remains to be done. The United Nations is obviously fully committed to working with Member States in this area. I strongly encourage the Council to use today's debate to be proactive and devise effective solutions to ensure the full and universal implementation of Member States disarmament and non-proliferation commitments.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ms. Nakamitsu for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ballard.

Mr. Ballard: On behalf of the Director-General, I wish to thank you, Sir, for inviting the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to address the Security Council today. We firmly believe that the Chemical Weapons Convention and resolution 1540 (2004) are mutually reinforcing, and meetings such as this provide valuable opportunities to engage with each other and reflect on how to further deepen our cooperation.

This year, the OPCW is commemorating its twentieth anniversary. As we reflect on the challenges that we have overcome and that we continue to face, we are also using the opportunity provided by our twentieth anniversary to look ahead, and what we can see is that our environment is changing. The rising threat of non-State actors, the pace of economic development and the evolution of science and technology are all shaping the future of the global disarmament and non-proliferation regimes, including the Chemical Weapons Convention and the OPCW. The use by non-State actors of chemical weapons is no longer a threat but a chilling reality.

As an organization, we recognize that we must be prepared to respond to these changes, to shift our focus to preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons, and to adjust our resources and programmes when the need arises. As an international community, we must work even more closely together to confront our common challenges. Preventing non-State actors from acquiring dual-use materials, equipment and technologies is of critical importance to the maintenance of the global norm against chemical weapons, as it is to international peace and security more broadly. To that end, the OPCW is intensively engaged across a number of programme areas that all spring from the singular objective of completely uprooting both the incentive and the means for producing or using chemical weapons.

As recently reconfirmed through resolution 2325 (2016), domestic implementation of international counter-proliferation commitments is of critical importance to the fight against terrorism using weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). The Chemical Weapons Convention also requires comprehensive national implementation of its provisions, and the OPCW dedicates considerable effort and resources to assist our States parties in fulfilling these obligations. As the Group of Experts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) knows, this is not an easy task, and it relates not only to ensuring that legislation is drafted but also that it is implemented and

enforced. We also work with our States parties, through our Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism, to coordinate the sharing of best practices when it comes to national implementation, particularly in the light of emerging threats to the Convention. Again, this ties in with the encouragement to United Nations Member States, as expressed in resolution 2325 (2016), to review their implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) in light of new and evolving security risks.

One of the key areas of focus identified through the recent review of resolution 1540 (2004) was transboundary movements of dual-use materials and technologies. The OPCW focuses considerable energy in this area. A recent memorandum of understanding between the OPCW and the World Customs Organization is aimed at reinforcing our efforts and at enhancing the security of the global supply chain. Similarly, our work with the global chemical industry is more important than ever. Collaboration and transparency in ensuring that toxic chemicals do not fall into the wrong hands are essential to preserving chemical security and ensuring the use of chemical science towards peaceful ends.

The OPCW is also working to improve coordination within the United Nations system on WMD-related issues. We have an active partnership with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. Together with the International Atomic Energy Agency, the OPCW co-chairs the working group on preventing and responding to WMD terrorist attacks with chemical or biological weapons. In January, the OPCW hosted a table-top exercise with the participation of 15 different organizations to test an inter-agency mechanism to respond to a chemical terrorist attack. That mechanism will enhance the interoperability of the relevant organizations for an effective, coordinated response. We believe that the newly established OCPW Rapid Response and Assistance Mission will provide an important capability to the mechanism.

The international community must continuously work to respond to the challenge of WMD terrorism. In that regard, the OPCW is committed to playing its part, in close cooperation with the Security Council, through its 1540 Committee, and with the range of stakeholders that are so critical to our collective goals.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Ballard for his briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

As Chair of the 1540 Committee, I am grateful for the opportunity to lead this open debate on the global effort to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors. All States have a responsibility to effectively implement resolution 1540 (2004), which was adopted unanimously on 28 April 2004. The resolution should be at the heart of our discussion today. As all members are aware, the main purpose of the resolution is to prevent nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, along with their delivery systems and related materials for their development and manufacture, from falling into the hands of non-State actors, including terrorists. I should stress that the resolution is unique in that regard, as it is the only legally binding instrument dealing with the proliferation of all three types of weapons of mass destruction.

In the nearly 13 years since its adoption, resolution 1540 (2004) has become one of the key components of the international regime to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. Participants are aware that the range of legislation and enforcement provisions required is broad. However, as a background to this debate, allow me to recall that the resolution includes prohibitions on non-State actors from developing, acquiring, manufacturing, possessing, transporting, transferring or using weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. Those seven prohibitions must also cover anyone acting as an accomplice to assist in any way, including by financing such activities. Similarly, domestic controls are needed on related materials, including measures in the areas of accounting, security, physical protection, border and law enforcement, and export controls.

Substantial efforts have already been made by many States to promote the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). In that regard, while the responsibility for implementation lies with individual States, such efforts can benefit from collaboration, whether bilaterally or collectively, on a regional basis. That is key to successful implementation. As stated in the concept note for this meeting, resolution 1540 (2004) is a platform for cooperation to prevent non-State actors from gaining access to weapons of mass destruction. Without cooperation it would be impossible to address the issue at a global level. It would also be counterproductive

to undermine the cooperative spirit that is already evident in the way the resolution is being implemented by moving in the direction of a strict mechanism for Member States.

The Security Council has called upon States

> "to take note in its work, where relevant, of the continually evolving nature of the risks of proliferation, including the use by non-State actors of rapid advances in science, technology and international commerce for proliferation purposes, in the context of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) (*resolution 2325 (2016), para. 8*).

The Council has also called on the 1540 Committee

> "to take into account developments on the evolving nature of risk of proliferation and rapid advances in science and technology in their implementation of resolution 1540 (2004)" (*ibid., para. 7*).

The Council thereby impressed upon States that they have the ultimate responsibility for those obligations in implementing resolution 1540 (2004).

In the 13 years since the adoption of resolution 1540 (2004), the developments I referred to have had a major impact on how cross-border movements and trade are conducted. While those are positive developments that bring about humanitarian and economic benefits, they also present challenges to the effective implementation of the obligations set out in resolution 1540 (2004). Keeping those and other developments under review in relation to preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors requires constant vigilance and effective international collaboration. I will be very interested in the experiences and views of Member States in that regard.

With regard to resolution 2325 (2016), which is an important prt of implementing resolution 1540 (2004), I would like to draw attention to paragraph 12 of resolution 2325 (2016). It calls for the full implementation of the obligations under resolution 1540 (2004) as a result of the 1540 Committee's 2016 comprehensive review of the implementation of the resolution. The paragraph also clearly notes the need for more attention on enforcement measures; measures relating to chemical, biological and nuclear weapons; measures on the financing of proliferation; measures on accounting for and securing related materials; and national export and trans-shipment controls. It will be interesting to hear how Member States are approaching those aspects of the resolution. I would also be grateful for the views of the international organizations represented here. The Council very much appreciates the participation of those representatives as key partners in our joint endeavours.

In the interests of time, I have highlighted just a few points of importance for our debate. However, not everything has to do with the obligations of States. I therefore look forward with interest to hearing more information from all participants in this meeting.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Council.

Mr. Shutenko (Ukraine): At the outset, I would like to thank the Bolivian presidency for holding today's open debate on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). I also thank you, Sir, for the statement delivered in your capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). I am also grateful for the briefings delivered by Ms. Nakamitsu and Mr. Ballard.

While fully aligning myself with the statement to be delivered later in this debate on behalf of the European Union, I would like to make some comments in my national capacity.

I fully share the view that the uniqueness of resolution 1540 (2004) lies in its complementarity of the existing international regimes on the non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery. Resolution 1540 (2004) adds a new dimension to the issue of non-proliferation by addressing the illegal trafficking in relevant materials and by prohibiting their acquisition by non-State actors, including terrorists.

The year 2016 marked a significant stage in promoting WMD non-proliferation. I wish to reiterate Ukraine's support for the outcomes of the recently concluded comprehensive review process, which culminated in the unanimous adoption of resolution 2325 (2016). Once properly implemented, the conclusions and recommendations of the review will reinforce resolution 1540 (2004). The report of the review (see S/2016/1038) — while clearly demonstrating both the varying progress made with regard to implementation on various types of WMD and the obligations set out in resolution 1540 (2004) — helps to define specific

areas for each party concerned as to where national or regional efforts should be intensified. Indeed, many significant challenges remain in terms of keeping the world's most dangerous materials from falling into the wrong hands, both intentionally or as a result of neglect or oversight.

Ukraine, as a State with a nuclear-weapons past and as a full-fledged party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention, as well as all export-control regimes, is strongly committed to the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and is determined to further increase the effectiveness of the national response to combat proliferation through collaboration, capacity-building and outreach.

Despite all the measures taken by Member States to reduce proliferation risks, we are witnessing growing and even more sophisticated challenges in this area. These risks arise not only from gaps in national legislation or insufficient resources, but also from the rapid development of science and technology, as well as e-commerce, along with a lack of threat awareness among academia, industry and civil society.

In the past decade, chemical and biological agents have quite often been referred to as potential weapons to be used by terrorists, other non-State actors and rogue States. Regrettably, there have been several confirmed cases of the use of chemical weapons, particularly in Syria, Iraq and Malaysia. Ukraine's positon in that regard is very clear: there can be no impunity, and all the perpetrators must be brought to justice. We stand united in condemning, in the strongest terms, any use of any type of WMD, which constitutes a violation of international law, a war crime and a crime against humanity.

The erosion to the existing world order, continuous breaches and unaddressed violations of international law, along with ongoing conflicts in different parts of the globe, continue to weaken the chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear security architecture as a whole. It is critical to find practical ways to ensure that the international legal norms related to WMD non-proliferation do not remain on paper, but that they are also properly enforced and fully respected. The international community should act decisively and in a united fashion with a view to preventing any attempts and countering every action taken to endanger the relevant international instruments through either aggressive policies and violations of State sovereignty and territorial integrity or through blocking important decisions to be adopted by the United Nations or its bodies.

With a view to tackling the growing threat of the proliferation of WMD globally, intensifying effective interactions among States and building synergies among all stakeholders, including the relevant international, regional, subregional, non-governmental organizations and civil society, are important and urgent tasks. In that regard, I wish to commend the historic contribution of Spain, the previous Chair of the 1540 Committee, to strengthening the role of that resolution for a long-term perspective, including through the establishment last year of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004). We fully support the statement to be delivered later today on behalf of the Group.

As far as the broader context of global non-proliferation efforts is concerned, I cannot but mention that Ukraine attaches particular importance to the Global Partnership initiative as a proper format for strengthening capabilities to resist today's threats and challenges in the area of WMD proliferation, including its terrorist dimension. In that regard, my country appreciates the efforts of Italy, President of the Group of Seven, for its able leadership in this area and for the promising results of the last Global Partnership working group meeting, held in Rome in February.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate that facilitating the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) underpins my country's position in the field of non-proliferation and anti-terrorist activities. Ukraine will continue to be engaged constructively both within the 1540 Committee and with the broader United Nations membership to ensure that the outcomes of the comprehensive review bear fruit. In that regard, I would like to mention that, in November this year in Kyiv, an international workshop on promoting the effective implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) in the context of evolving proliferation risks and challenges will be held in cooperation with the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Mr. Skoog (Sweden): I thank you, Mr. President, for organizing today's open debate. I would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Nakamitsu, Mr. Ballard

and you, Mr. President, for the very comprehensive and informative briefings this morning.

Sweden aligns itself with the statements that will be made later by the observer of the European Union, by the representative of Spain, on behalf of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004), and by the representative of Norway on behalf of the Nordic countries.

Today's discussion on resolution 1540 (2004) and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, particularly with regard to non-State actors, is very timely. As we have seen from recent terrorist attacks, the aim of the perpetrators is to indiscriminately injure and kill as many innocent people as possible. Therefore, we must be alert to the fact that there is a real threat of non-State actors seeking to procure and use weapons of mass destruction.

Sweden remains strongly committed to the strengthening of the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation regimes, not least in the field of nuclear disarmament. Resolution 1540 (2004) is an important complement to those regimes. The use of chemical weapons by Da'esh and the enduring ability of some States with weapons of mass destruction aspirations to contravene export controls bear witness to the continuing and growing relevance of resolution 1540 (2004).

As we heard from your own briefing this morning, Mr. President, progress has been achieved in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004); however, much work remains to be done to ensure its application globally. Sweden is committed to supporting that work. We recently made a special financial contribution to the Office for Disarmament Affairs for the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). In addition, we are contributing to global efforts in support of the resolution's objectives through the nuclear security cooperation programme of the Swedish Radiation Safety Authority, and our engagement in the Group of Seven Global Partnership programme, where we currently co-chair the biosecurity sub-working group.

However, we should not limit our attention to items and materials alone; knowledge and information also represent important factors in the attainment of weapons of mass destruction. It is important to highlight the risks associated with intangible transfers of technology, whereby sensitive know-how might be transferred through research, industry or social media. This is an issue that we raised repeatedly during last year's comprehensive review. As Vice-Chair of the 1540 Committee, we are currently considering ways of highlighting this issue, including through outreach events.

Finally, we would like to congratulate Spain once more for the proactive and committed way in which it led the comprehensive review last year, and to commend Bolivia for the continuation of those efforts under its leadership. It is essential that we continue to take into consideration the evolving proliferation threats as we move forward towards the global implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 2325 (2016).

The threat that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction poses to international peace and security continues to grow. It is only through States working together in full support for the multilateral institutions we have put in place that this threat can be managed.

Mr. Ciss (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, first of all, to thank the Bolivian presidency for taking the initiative to organize this debate on the important issue of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. I would also like to thank Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu and Mr. Joseph Ballard for their particularly informative presentations.

Assuredly, our debate is timely, given the current situation, which reminds us constantly of the sad realities that are the threat of terrorism and the risk that non-State actors may acquire nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Those threats are all the more worrying against the backdrop of the rapid developments in science and technology, globalization and the constantly changing business and trade environment, which are new factors that non-State actors can take advantage of in order to gain access to weapons of mass destruction.

Unfortunately, that risk is very real today with the use of chemical weapons in the Middle East, as well as with regard to issues related to cybersecurity, the consequences of which could be even more serious if such attacks were directed against nuclear power plants, for example. That is why the topic under discussion today should encourage us to redouble our efforts and fully implement the obligations set out in resolution 1540 (2004). Moreover, strengthening the prevention system to avoid the humanitarian, political, economic and environmental disaster that could result from the use of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons

by non-State actors, including terrorists, is more urgent than ever.

In that connection, the Security Council, seriously concerned about that threat, felt compelled to address a series of requests and to impose a set of obligations on Member States through the adoption of resolution 1540 (2004). Today we must accurately take inventory of all the sources of weapons of mass destruction throughout the world in order to ensure that they can be systematically safeguarded or simply destroyed. While important steps have already been taken, much remains to be done.

In the light of all those challenges, my country is of the view that, in today's interdependent world where our interests are interlinked, we must strengthen cooperation in terms of border control, monitoring of financial flows and Internet networks, and legal assistance in order to develop an appropriate strategy to prevent weapons of mass destruction from falling into the wrong hands. To that end, we will need to generate synergies among all the stakeholders concerned and share our experiences.

Moreover, countries should take steps to implement their obligations arising from resolution 1540 (2004). Those include, inter alia, first, developing voluntary five-year national action plans for implementing resolution 1540 (2004); secondly, establishing national coordination mechanisms for detecting activities by non-State actors in order to boost cooperation among the relevant national actors; thirdly, the implementing national legislative frameworks on terrorism; and, fourthly, putting in place physical protection systems for nuclear, radiological, biological and chemical materials and their installations to cover the entire life cycle of said material and to govern their transportation, as well as to strengthen the capacities of border services, in particular through the training of agents and the provision of detection equipment.

In 2016, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2325 (2016), which substantially reinforced the provisions already in force in resolution 1540 (2014). It should be noted that the measures added to the recommendations emanating from the comprehensive review process of resolution 1540 (2004) have enabled Member States, relevant international and regional organizations and civil society to redirect their efforts and strategies towards a more comprehensive, coordinated and consistent approach in order sustainably address the multiple challenges facing international peace and security. If properly implemented, those proposals for concrete, practical and appropriate measures by Member States could greatly contribute to strengthening the system in order to prevent any potential catastrophe that could be caused by the use of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors.

In the case of Africa, an analysis of the data shows steady progress in the implementation of the measures established by resolution 1540 (2004), in particular in terms of the development of appropriate legislation and the submission of implementation reports. That development should be welcomed, although we must bear in mind that such measures need to be improved, in particular through the adoption of national legislative frameworks for biological weapons, which many African countries still lack. There is also a need for effective domestic controls to monitor sensitive materials and technologies.

Moreover, the Senegalese delegation would like to recall the political commitment of the African Union to support the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by African States, which was reflected in the organization of several meetings on the subject. We therefore call for the continuation of such cooperation initiatives between the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and African countries, the majority of which have benefited from the Committee's support in terms of the implementation of their obligations under the resolution.

Assistance is also a key aspect of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). Progress could be made, in particular as we seek to improve assistance procedures, data gathering and an analysis of assistance needs. We could also further our discussions on the topic of assistance with relevant international, regional and subregional organizations and, where appropriate, with non-governmental organizations. That would require enhancing the capacities of the 1540 Committee and its Group of Experts to better provide assistance to those countries that request it.

At the same time, the Security Council could consider ways to strengthen the warning and prevention system to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular among non-State actors, by strengthening coordination among the system's components, as well as by monitoring the implementation of the obligations under resolution

1540 (2004) and through an analysis of the risks of proliferation.

We also encourage the training of national focal points, and therefore call on the Member States with sufficient resources to contribute them. We reiterate the need to create a sustainable mechanism to improve interaction and coordination among those requesting and those providing assistance in order to avoid duplication and identify best practices for assistance in order to replicate them. The primary challenge is therefore to improve the coordination of existing tools in order to limit the likelihood for non-State actors to engage in proliferation.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Senegal's willingness and unwavering commitment to make every effort to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. To that end, my country has taken steps to fulfil its obligations under resolution 1540 (2004). Among those measures, we underscore the establishment of national coordination mechanisms to detect the activities of non-State actors, which facilitates collaboration between the relevant national actors, and the implementation of programmes for the technical and human capacity-building of the National Commission on Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Weapons and the Authority for Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety.

Senegal will continue to focus its efforts on fulfilling its commitments in this area, because it is aware that cooperation and the pooling of efforts, experiences and expertise are the only way to ensure that we will have a better understanding of these threats in order to develop consistent, holistic and comprehensive strategies and approaches to effectively deal with these challenges.

Ms. Tachco (United States of America): I thank our briefers for their presentations today. In the context of the evolving threats posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, today's debate reminds us of the importance of the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). The is committed to assisting States and international organizations in their efforts to prevent non-State actors from developing and acquiring nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their delivery systems.

We also align ourselves with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Spain on behalf of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004).

Despite the progress made over the past 13 years, significant gaps remain in the implementation of the resolution's obligations, particularly in the areas of chemical and biological security and controlling means of delivery. We must work more smartly as we move forward. The 2016 report (see S/2016/1038) on the comprehensive review of the status of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) along with resolution 2325 (2016), adopted in December 2016, provide guidance on how to achieve future progress. Today I am going to touch on a few of those challenges and discuss ways whereby we might overcome them.

Recently, we have seen the horror of chemical-weapon attacks by States and non-State actors in the Middle East, particularly in Syria. The confirmed use of the deadly nerve agent VX in Malaysia is even more shocking. Those trends are unsettling and alarming, which is why the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) must work to hold States more accountable for preventing the use and spread of chemical weapons and ensuring effective control over such materials. As part of our commitment to stopping the use of chemical weapons, we need to work together to help States in promoting best practices on chemical security to detect and prevent the misuse of chemicals. Moreover, the comprehensive review and resolution 2325 (2016) called for increased assistance through matchmaking and dialogue. The exchange of expertise and assistance is extremely valuable to States, to the Committee and to the global non-proliferation regime.

While resolution 1540 (2004) is aimed at deterring non-State actors, its obligations are binding on Member States. It is therefore troubling that the Syrian regime has continued to use chemical weapons. We call on all Member States that oppose the use of chemical weapons to urge President Al-Assad to cooperate with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and cease using chemicals as weapons. President Trump made that clear this week. Moreover, Syria's continued use of chemical weapons will only increase the risk that elements of its chemical weapons programme could fall into the wrong hands.

The 1540 Committee must also continue to work towards strengthening the global nuclear security architecture and increase cooperation among international organizations, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency and INTERPOL. We must help States build their capacity to secure nuclear and

other radioactive materials, convert research reactors from highly enriched uranium to low enriched uranium and address critical gaps to counter the smuggling of nuclear and other radioactive materials.

The comprehensive review and resolution 2325 (2016) also highlighted the need for States to establish effective control over materials that could be used for weapons of mass destruction, including through the development of national control lists to monitor production and the movement of such materials. To prevent the illicit trade in weapons of mass destruction-related materials, the United States is providing training and technical assistance and detection, inspection and interdiction equipment to border and customs authorities all over the world.

Last year's report and resolution 2325 (2016) also recommended that the 1540 Committee give greater consideration to the evolving nature of the risk of proliferation and the rapid advances in science and technology. Such developments could lower the barriers to the development of weapons of mass destruction, thereby making the mitigation of those risks even more complex and challenging. The United States is eager to work with others to ensure that we strengthen key obligations under resolution 1540 (2004). The 1540 Committee and resolution 2325 (2016) are key tools in stemming the spread of weapons of mass destruction and helping to maintain international peace and security.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to thank the briefers — Ms. Nakamitsu and Mr. Ballard — for their valuable presentations. Likewise, I thank you, Sir, as President of the Council, for organizing this open debate and for providing us with a very interesting concept note, as well as the information that you just provided to us in your capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

Uruguay aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Spain on behalf of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004).

Uruguay is a country firmly committed to the disarmament and non-proliferation regime and calls for strengthening multilateralism as part of its efforts to promote universal and complete disarmament. True to its commitment, Uruguay has adhered to and ratified existing regional and international treaties for such purposes. Similarly, we promote and support those forums designed to advance universal and transparent negotiations in the field of disarmament, such as the United Nations conference currently taking place at Headquarter to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, Lleading to their total elimination.

On many occasions we have addressed the theme of weapons of mass destruction here in the Chamber. It goes without saying that, in the framework of adopting measures on preventing the use or threat of use of such weapons, it is the obligation of Member States to scrupulously respect their obligations under international law and the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

Uruguay is concerned about the growing threat of terrorism and the growing risk that these weapons will fall into the hands of non-State actors, including terrorist groups, which would bring about unpredictable and devastating consequences for humankind. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction constitutes a serious and real threat to world security. The use of chemical weapons in countries of the Middle East and Asia demonstrates how real and dangerous this threat is.

Uruguay has followed with concern the continuing attacks taking place in Syria, including most recently in Khan Shaykun last April. In that regard, we support the work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Fact-Finding Mission in Syria and the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism to shed light on those incidents so that the perpetrators thereof are brought to justice for committing such grave crimes. The Joint Investigative Mechanism has already identified the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham/Da'esh and the Syrian Government as the perpetrators of some of those attacks in Syria. There are reports that the same has happened in Iraq, and therefore investigations should also be carried out in that country to corroborate the facts.

Resolution 1540 (2004) is the main legally binding instrument that we have that covers the three types of weapons of mass destruction. The role the resolution in preventing the acquisition and use of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors along with the work of the 1540 Committee in its four areas of work are crucial to combating the threat. The full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and resolution 2325 (2016) requires the ongoing efforts of all States — at the

national, regional and international levels — as well as greater assistance and cooperation in capacity-building and in the exchange of best practices among States. International cooperation must be strengthened even further in order to prevent, deter, halt and eliminate the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems by terrorist groups. Uruguay stresses the need to enhance assistance and cooperation among States, and among States and international, regional and subregional organizations that are relevant to the 1540 Committee.

The primary responsibility of States is to take appropriate steps at the national level, in line with their national legislation and international law, to strengthen export controls and to control access to intangible technology transfers and to information that could be used to develop weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. Both importing and exporting countries should exercise due control over their operations and ensure the full security of sensitive materials to prevent them falling under the control of terrorist groups.

In conclusion, I would like to express Uruguay's firm commitment to implementing the resolution. I also thank the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) for their valuable visit to Uruguay in April, which enabled us to begin drafting our national plan of action for the resolution's implementation.

Mr. Safronkov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome you, Mr. President, in your capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). We listened with great interest to your statement and the briefings by Ms. Nakamitsu, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and Mr. Ballard, representing the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). We are also grateful to the Bolivian chairship of the Committee for its responsible and professional leadership of that subsidiary body of the Council.

Resolution 1540 (2004), initiated jointly by Russia and the United States in 2004, is one of the pillars of non-proliferation. Ensuring that every country can fully implement it is one of the international community's pressing tasks, and it is our hope that today's debate will be a major contribution to tackling that global challenge. Resolution 1540 (2004) remains the sole universal international document on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), obliging all countries to establish effective national systems for controlling WMDs, their delivery systems and related materials, and preventing them from falling into the hands of non-State actors.

That goal has taken on major significance in the wake of the unprecedentedly complex and numerous regional conflicts taking place in the world today. The terror organizations involved in them have access to the technology and infrastructure needed to develop and use chemical weapons. We agree with Mr. Ballard that this is no longer a mere threat but a harsh reality. The events in the Middle East are a clear example of that, and serve to emphasize the relevance of our meeting today. The threat of chemical and biological terrorism is becoming ever greater in scale and in its transborder nature. We have heard again and again about militants from the Islamic State and other groups using industrial chemicals, and even chemical warfare substances, for terrorist purposes, facts that have been confirmed — even officially confirmed — by the Western intelligence community. With regard to such crimes, we would in particular like to emphasize that we must realize that, over the past five or six years, extremist organizations have gained considerable experience not just in using chemical weapons but in manufacturing them. The proliferation of that knowledge is as much of a threat as is the use of such WMDs.

We support strengthening the counter-terrorist aspects of non-proliferation. We understand how urgent it is to find responses to new challenges and threats. In the light of the current terrorist activities in Syria and Iraq by the so-called Islamic State, the Al-Nusra Front and other terrorist groups, the significance of resolution 1540 (2004) can only grow. The Council should thoroughly investigate and respond to any reports that non-State actors may have gained access to chemical weapons, with an objective, impartial and professional investigation with no potential for politicization. The process should be based on credible and verifiable facts and should avoid any potential for deliberate disinformation. We need to see a tough reaction from the Council to any violations of the resolution. Any assistance to non-State actors in acquiring WMDs or the materials, components and technologies used in their production is impermissible. Only collaborative efforts on the part of all Member States to implement the provisions of resolution 1540 (2004) can ensure

successful results. We support the appeals that Ms. Nakamitsu made on the subject in her briefing.

The issue of combating terrorist attacks is so acute that the machinery designed to enable resolution 1540 (2004) to carry out its vital function is not enough. We would therefore like to remind the Council of Russia's initiative concerning the drafting of an international convention on the fight against acts of chemical or biological terrorism. Such a convention could cover the advances that the international community has approved in recent years, particularly through provisions criminalizing activities falling within its purview, defining jurisdictions and appropriate levels of legal response, implementing the principle of extradite-or-prosecute, and so forth. It is clear that traditional views of what constitutes arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation are gradually blurring. Effectively, the entire area has acquired a new element and another dimension — the counter-terrorism dimension. The so-called Islamic State's acquisition of the industrial capacity to produce chemical weapons and the danger of their proliferation throughout the Middle East serve to emphasize the relevance of Russia's efforts to formulate the such a convention.

We believe that we should work actively to define the national and regional components for implementing resolution 1540 (2004). We should study best practices and conduct seminars for points of contact, because their benefits are clear. A number of Member States, including Russia, have already commended the seminars that have been held for national points of contact, and we welcome the intention of the People's Republic of China to organize a similar event in August.

In order to improve the effectiveness of the Committee's work, we should draw on the capacities of international and regional organizations and ensure that their planned tasks conform with States' requests. We also support the involvement of the scientific and business communities. Needless to say, all of this should take place under the leadership and oversight of State entities. Russia is committed to strengthening the non-proliferation regime, including within the framework of the 1540 Committee, and will make every possible effort to deal with this challenge.

With regard to the statement by the representative of the United States, I would like to point out that Syria's armed forces pose no threat to the American specialists. We have no information about anything like that, whatever the reports may be. However, we once again affirm our position that Russia will continue to insist on a comprehensive, professional and politically impartial investigation of chemical attacks — not just in Khan Shaykhun but also with regard to any other occurrence, or recurrence, of chemical terrorism in Syria and Iraq — as provided for in resolution 2319 (2016).

With regard to extending the mandate of the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism for another year, its geographic scope and counter-terrorism dimension must be expanded. An objective investigation is the only way to get to the truth — not based on the fabrications of terrorists, extremists, opposition members, their foreign sympathizers and sponsors and non-governmental organizations and all their efforts to blame Damascus. For now, it is important that we avoid any provocation and prevent any unilateral acts, and that we support the significant political momentum that the discussions in Astana and the intra-Syrian talks in Geneva represent.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to thank Bolivia for its initiative in convening a key discussion as we seek to strengthen international efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and to ensure that they do not fall into the hands of non-State actors, particularly terrorist organizations. We also congratulate you, Sir, on your wise and able chairship of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). We welcomed the adoption of resolution 2325 (2016) under the Spanish presidency of the Security Council in December last year. I also thank Ms. Nakamitsu and the representative of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for their briefings to the Council.

The year 2004 was marked by effective efforts on the part of the international community to prevent non-State actors and entities from developing, acquiring, manufacturing, transporting or using WMDs in all their forms — whether that be nuclear, chemical, radiological or biological weapons. Consequently, in 2004 the Security Council adopted resolution 1540 (2004) in response to the clamour of the international community for steps to be taken.

Nevertheless, we need to acknowledge that the world has become more complicated since 2004. International security threats have evolved very rapidly

and it is difficult to keep up with them. The arsenal of armed groups and terrorists has expanded to include the use of chemical weapons — to which they have recourse as a standard weapon — and other WMDs. That is borne out by the current state of affairs in the Middle East and the actions undertaken by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant/Da'esh — actions proven by the investigations of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism. Other terrorist groups, such as Jabhat Al-Nusra and other militias, have also used WMDs to sow destruction and suffering among the population of that region.

The challenges that the international community must overcome in that regard will require us to pay more attention to the way we prevent those entities and groups from obtaining WMDs and using them. We would like to share some observations and proposals on how the international community could step up its efforts.

First of all, we need to develop an integrated and effective United Nations model in order to open the door to a world free of the threat of WMDs falling into the hands of terrorists. We will need to coordinate and harmonize United Nations counter-terrorism strategies. We also must avoid any meddling or interference in the affairs of sovereign States as the United Nations seeks to play a coordinating role. States bear the primary responsibility for setting up national preventive mechanisms under resolution 1540 (2004). That is a key responsibility and obligation and a crucial step towards ensuring the full and effective implementation of the resolution. States must remember that responsibility.

Secondly, we must take steps to provide timely and relevant technical assistance to States that request it. We must plug the current gaps in financing that assistance by, inter alia, fully funding the voluntary trust fund of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA).

Thirdly, we must enhance our cooperation with international and regional organizations, as well as the relevant subregional organizations. The Egyptian delegation is responsible for coordinating those efforts within the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and, through its role in the Committee, spearheads action to improve collaboration with all the relevant stakeholders.

Fourthly, we must raise awareness and ensure more comprehensive and integrated international efforts on issues pertaining to transportation and transparency. We must work more closely with the Department of Political Affairs and UNODA, as well as the Office of the Secretary-General, so as to coordinate our efforts and approaches. All of those bodies must collaborate more closely with the Group of Experts of the 1540 (2004) Committee, particularly with regard to chemical and biological threats, as needed, as well as nuclear threats.

Fifthly, Egypt suggests that we review the ways in which we legally deal with new technologies like e-commerce and other emerging technologies, such as in the field of biology, to make sure that there is a proper legal framework that covers new developments.

Egypt will work tirelessly to support efforts in that regard, whether nationally or internationally. It submitted four reports — in 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2016 — commensurate with its responsibilities under resolution 1540 (2004). Those reports detail the steps taken by the relevant Egyptian authorities towards the resolution's implementation at the national. We also adopted the voluntary national matrix following its review and endorsement by the specialized authorities in Cairo. Similarly, in 2007 Egypt set up out a national commission on this issue.

We are firmly convinced that the only way to prevent non-State actors and terrorists from acquiring WMDs is by ensuring that we live in a world free of such weapons in all their forms. Any such effort must first seek to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones throughout the world, including a zone free of WMDs in the Middle East, in line with the resolution of the 1995 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and in response to the calls of the relevant international bodies.

Finally, I would like to convey my gratitude to Bolivia for all its efforts on this matter.

Mr. Wilson (United Kingdom): I thank Under-Secretary-General Nakamitsu and her team, as well as Mr. Joseph Ballard. It is always good to have the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) represented here in the Chamber, as cooperation between our institutions is vital.

While this agenda item is a regular feature of the Security Council's programme of work, there is in fact

nothing regular about it. The spectre of biological, chemical or nuclear materials falling into terrorist hands is the nightmare scenario for many of us in the Chamber.

The use of such materials by terrorists is, sadly, not hypothetical matter. Thanks to the hard work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism in Syria, we know what happens when terrorists' hateful intent is paired with these equally hateful weapons. We saw the results in the sulfur mustard attack that Da'esh carried out in Aleppo's Mari district in August 2015, leaving residents blistered and burning. Other cases are also under investigation. Clearly, preventing weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) from falling into terrorist hands is a vital linchpin for preserving international peace and security.

That is why it is so crucial that, following the comprehensive review and adoption of resolution 2325 (2016), the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) focus on reaching the ultimate goal of full, worldwide implementation — turning resolution 1540 (2004) into reality. As the 1540 Committee does that, it must take account of new and emerging challenges from the evolving terrorist threat and advances in science and technology. The Committee must also look to improve technical assistance, including by strengthening the 1540 Committee's process for matching Member States' requests for support with offers for assistance. We must do all we can to encourage Member States to submit their reports on their implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) at the national level. That applies in particular to the few remaining States that are yet to submit a national report.

Much remains to be done, but the Committee should not do it alone. Indeed, the challenges we face are far too great to simply rely on the 15 Governments gathered around this table. We must strengthen regional and international cooperation and outreach to civil society and industry to support implementation efforts. Every country and every sector has a role to play, and we should embrace their help.

While we must take every step to ensure that these terrible weapons never fall into the hands of terrorists, we must also never overlook the horrific and, sadly, growing allegations of the use of these weapons by State actors. The United Kingdom unreservedly condemns the use of any chemical weapon in any circumstance. In particular, we are horrified about reports that Kim Jong-nam was apparently killed with VX in Malaysia earlier this year. Confirmation that a nerve agent once banned by the Chemical Weapons Convention was used at the instigation of a State would be yet another troubling rejection of international norms.

The United Kingdom has also concluded that the Al-Assad regime has continued to use chemical weapons against its own people — in breach of international law and the rules of war. We look forward to receiving further reporting from the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic. Once we have the results of those investigations, the international community must send a united response.

Let me conclude by calling on the 1540 Committee to redouble its efforts. The United Kingdom is committed to playing its part in ensuring that the Committee succeeds in its vital task ahead. The cost of failure, of allowing further weapons of mass destruction to fall into the hands of those who wish to wreak havoc, is simply too high to bear.

Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan): We would like to thank Bolivia, as President of the Council and Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), for convening today's vital debate. I would also like to commend Under-Secretary-General Nakamitsu and Mr. Ballard for their insights and to pay tribute to their commitment to ensuring a safe and secure world for us.

Kazakhstan urges that we ensure the full and effective implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 2325 (2016), which we consider extremely important. The international community must make a concerted effort if it is to comply with their provisions, for these two resolutions have a special contribution to make to strengthening the international non-proliferation architecture. Our country has experienced first-hand the horrifying consequences of the testing of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and is determined to be at the forefront of the global fight against their proliferation and the risk of their use. Strict adherence to all the obligations to prevent the proliferation of such weapons and relentless efforts to improve national systems of control over materials that could be used to produce WMDs are more important than they have ever been.

I would first like to draw the Council's attention to the following achievements and specific activities that we have undertaken at the national and regional level.

Thanks to its stringent nuclear-security measures, Kazakhstan is among the top 20 countries in the world in its security levels for nuclear facilities and materials. All our nuclear facilities are under the comprehensive control of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and accompanied by strong controls of our borders with neighbouring countries as well as of aviation and other transit modes. The IAEA's low-enriched uranium bank will launch in Kazakhstan on 29 August and is a clear indication of the global commitment to halting the proliferation of such sensitive technologies.

Through the Global Threat Reduction Initiative of the United States and the Russian Federation's Energy and Security Centre, active steps are being taken to ensure the security of nuclear facilities and materials in Kazakhstan and Central Asia. Early in May, Kazakhstan hosted a two-day seminar in Astana on strengthening the safety of radiation sources with a view to preventing illicit trafficking in radioactive materials in Central Asia. The participation of all our neighbours will ensure a well-coordinated intra-regional collaboration in this area. Very recently, on 12 May, we opened the first regional nuclear security training centre in Almaty. With the support of international organizations such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, INTERPOL and other specialized institutions, it will play a valuable role in providing expertise to specialists in relevant fields for the entire Central Asian region and beyond.

Secondly, while commending the considerable progress that has been made on implementing resolutions 1540 (2004) and 2325 (2016), we must acknowledge the fact that there is still much more to be done. In that regard, we would like to propose what we feel are the most salient steps for the way forward. We are confident that individual interactions with every country, increased outreach activities and the provision of sufficient financial resources will contribute significantly to ensuring strict control over the implementation of national commitments in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. Given the importance of capacity-building among Member States, Kazakhstan has decided to make a voluntary contribution to the United Nations Trust Fund for Global and Regional Disarmament Activities, with the goal of helping States to implement their obligations under resolution 1540 (2004).

Taking the evolving nature of the risks of the proliferation of WMDs into account, including the use by non-State actors of the rapid advances that are being made in science and technology, we would like to emphasize the initiative we have taken to establish a United Nations register of scientific developments that can lead to the creation or advancement of WMDs, designed to track such dangerous discoveries. Since funding for travelling and regional outreach is limited, much progress could also be made through the creation of online training modules, to be offered in a number of languages on the 1540 Committee website for various categories of Government personnel — lawmakers, executives, law-enforcement officials, border-control agents and criminal prosecutors. We believe that the Committee's limited resources and staff could be supplemented by the academic, scientific, technical and legal communities, providing valuable input on new trends and training on the completion of matrices and on standards verification and assessments.

Lastly, I would like to reaffirm Kazakhstan's firm commitment to consolidating the international community's efforts to rid the world of weapons of mass destruction. To achieve that, we must consistently strengthen and expand the non-proliferation regime, primarily within the framework of resolution 1540 (2004).

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you, Sir, for your dual role, as President of the Council and Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), in organizing today's important meeting. I would also like to thank Ms. Nakamitsu and Mr. Ballard for their very informative briefings.

I should add that France associates itself with the statement to be delivered by the observer of the European Union and supports the statement that the representative of Spain will make on behalf of the Group of Friends of Resolution 1540.

The past few months have seen a heavy assault on fundamental aspects of our collective security, in violation of rules that we all value and of which resolution 1540 (2004) is a crucial part. The proliferation of biological, chemical and nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, and the risk of their use by non-State actors, have become a dangerous reality. But we should

make no mistake — the repeated assaults on the non-proliferation regime that we are witnessing in Asia and the Middle East are far from being a monopoly of non-State actors, and terrorist groups in particular. In Asia, we have seen North Korea's crash development of its nuclear and ballistic programmes and its chemical-weapon attack in Malaysia this winter. It is also the case in the Middle East, particularly in Syria, where the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime and Da'esh has been confirmed by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism. That is made even more worrying by the fact that the suspected continued existence of toxic chemical stocks in Syria increases the likelihood that they will be more accessible to terrorist groups.

In this difficult context, we must work harder than ever to mobilize in order to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by anyone, and by non-State actors in particular. That demands above all that we do better at considering the risks of exploiting technological advances for the purposes of proliferation, a subject that the 1540 Committee has to address. In that regard, I would like to commend the analytical and advocacy efforts of the Group of Experts in support of the Committee.

Needless to say, we must all work harder to intensify and assess our implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). We must all prevent and discourage the financing of proliferation, ensure the highest possible levels of security for sensitive goods and materials on our territories and strengthen export controls, especially considering the risk of the use of emerging technologies. For its part, France has modernized its national legal framework for combating proliferation, criminalizing proliferation activities and punishing their financing. We are also very involved in working to prevent the risk of terrorists acquiring sensitive nuclear materials and we are an active supporter of the efforts of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. I should also mention the role of the European Union, whose dynamic and continuing awareness-raising efforts have contributed to this cooperative action. The EU adopted a new decision last month giving €2.6 million to support the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). We also welcome other actions that have already been undertaken or announced, including regional workshops for training points of contact in the implementation of the resolution.

However, the sum of our individual actions is not enough. As stated in the concept note, resolution 1540 (2004) is a unique platform for cooperation. We have to make this happen by concrete actions through two means: further anchoring the logic of assistance and cooperation in our efforts and taking the specificity of each country concerned into account. As Coordinator of the Working Group on Assistance, France attaches particular importance to strengthening the regional dimension and to improving the coherence between the needs and the assistance offered. The Committee's newly updated template for requests for assistance, for example, should contribute to that end.

Finally, we must take stock of current challenges by strengthening synergies with forums facing the same issues, be they within the United Nations or outside it, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the World Customs Organization, or such export-control regimes as the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, of which France is the secretariat, the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Australia Group, whose plenary meeting is being held in Paris this week, from 26 to 30 June 2017. These interactions should be encouraged and strengthened. The Council can count on France's steadfast commitment on this priority issue.

Mr. Lambertini (Italy) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on having convened this timely debate in your capacity both as President of the Security Council for this month and as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

Italy aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations. We also align ourselves with the statement to be made by Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi, representative of Spain, on behalf of the Group of Friends of Resolution 1540. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Spain for the work accomplished in the Security Council and for its leadership of the Group of Friends.

(*spoke in English*)

I also would like to thank both the Under-Secretary-General, Ms. Nakamitsu, and Mr. Joseph Ballard for their briefings.

Resolutions 1540 (2004) and 2325 (2016) constitute the central pillars of the international non-proliferation architecture and are key instruments for preventing the most dangerous materials in the world from falling into the wrong hands. The report of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism has proven and confirmed the use of chemical weapons by both State and non-State actors.

The rapid advances in science and technology, as well as the globalization of commercial, logistic and economic transactions, make it harder for States to control proliferation activities and enable terrorists to take advantage of transnational criminal networks to gain access to weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). In this regard, more attention should also be paid to the so-called intangible transfer of technology, which is reflected both in resolution 2325 (2016) and in the programme of work of the 1540 Committee. Strengthening cooperation and the exchange of experience in the areas of border control, surveillance of financial flows on the Internet and other networks and legal assistance have today grown in importance. Similarly, enhancing protection of critical infrastructure relevant to the non-proliferation of WMDs from the increasing risk of cyberattack is more important than ever. It remains imperative for Member States to effectively implement the provisions of this resolution, establish domestic controls, have effective points of contact and maintain an active dialogue with the Committees.

We take this opportunity to emphasize the need to achieve the universal implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and the importance for States to submit their first national implementation reports. Despite admirable progress, the non-proliferation regime continues to be confronted with serious threats, and recent alarming developments have clearly demonstrated that no State is immune to this danger. We know this from the work that we have been carrying out this year in the Security Council.

As underscored in last year's comprehensive review, the delivery of technical assistance continues to represent the key element to facilitating and improving Member States's compliance with their obligations. In this regard, we welcome all the outreach activities conducted by the 1540 Committee and its strong engagement in providing capacity-building assistance to those stakeholders that need it the most, despite the resource constraints of which we are all aware. As Chair of the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, we invited the 1540 Committee to make a presentation of its work, in particular with regard to Africa, in order to highlight current needs and increase opportunities for donors to cooperate with the potential recipients, as well as with the Committee itself. We are willing to continue this cooperation with the 1540 Committee.

Last year represented a significant step forward for efforts to prevent non-State actors from acquiring and using weapons of mass destruction. It is important now that we build upon that momentum. We thank Bolivia for its leadership and commitment at the helm of the Committee and pledge our full support.

Ms. Guadey (Ethiopia): I would like to start by commending Bolivia for organizing today's debate and for its leadership in steering the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). We thank Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu and Mr. Joseph Ballard for their respective briefings.

Ethiopia aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the Bolivian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Ethiopia welcomes the progress made in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and subsequent resolutions aimed at preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and their means of delivery to non-State actors. However, we note with great concern the continued risk of proliferation, particularly considering reports on the use of chemical weapons by terrorists in the Middle East. Such reports clearly indicate the serious threats posed by the proliferation of WMDs and their means of delivery when they fall into the hands of non-State actors.

In relation to the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and subsequent Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2325 (2016), I would like to highlight the following four points.

First, addressing the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction would primarily require a total ban and elimination of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction. That is why it is important to work towards the universalization and full implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention.

The successful conclusion of the ongoing negotiation on a legally binding instrument on the prohibition of the production and use of nuclear weapons, if not a total ban on them, with the possible adoption of a legally binding outcome document would, in our view, significantly contribute to addressing the risk of proliferation of nuclear weapons into the hands of non-State actors.

Secondly, as you highlighted in your opening remarks, Mr. President, the prevention of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction into the hands of non-State actors would require a range of legislative and enforcement measures that prohibits them from developing, acquiring, manufacturing, possessing, transporting, transferring or using WMDs and their means of delivery. Coordinated national measures by Member States involving all relevant stakeholders, such as the law-enforcement, customs and financial sectors, will be critical in preventing the risk of proliferation. Such national efforts could be complemented by international and regional efforts. They could also be supported by assistance programmes within the framework of the 1540 Committee.

Thirdly, enhancing cooperation between the 1540 Committee and regional organizations would also be relevant. For instance, the African region, through the Common African Defence and Security Policy, has identified the accumulation of stockpiling, proliferation and manufacture of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery, as a common external threat to continental security as they may endanger or pose a direct or indirect constraint on individual and collective efforts to achieve continental security goals. It is therefore important for the Committee to further strengthen its cooperation with the African Union and its member States in the implementation of the Common African Defence and Security Policy and other regional frameworks, such as the African nuclear-weapon-free zone. Through such a regional approach, the Committee could identify the specific priorities and challenges of each region and subregion and strengthen its support and assistance accordingly.

Enhanced cooperation at the regional and international levels within the framework of the 1540 Committee, including through assistance programmes and exchange of information and best practices, is very important. In this regard, we welcome the holding of the three original courses for 1540 points of contact. We would further encourage the Committee to explore other mechanisms to strengthen its support for member States and regional organizations in accordance with paragraph 9 of the 1540 Committee's programme of work.

I would like to conclude my statement by reaffirming Ethiopia's commitment to continuing to take all the necessary measures to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to keep them from falling into the hands of non-State actors and to fully implement resolution 1540 (2004) and subsequent Security Council resolutions on the issue, in particular by strengthening the legal and administrative framework for prohibiting the manufacture, acquisition, possession, development, transport, transfer or use of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors.

Mr. Bessho (Japan): I would like to begin by thanking the Bolivian presidency for organizing today's open debate. The non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) is a priority for Japan. I also wish to thank the two briefers, Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu and Mr. Joseph Ballard, for their clear and informative briefings.

Japan aligns itself with the joint statement of the Group of Friends of Resolution 1540 (2004), which is to be delivered later by the representative of Spain.

Japan once again welcomes the adoption of resolution 2325 (2016) in December of last year. However, we must recognize and remain vigilant against the threat posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction taking place now. The threat from North Korea's nuclear and ballistic-missile development has reached a new level. These activities are in blatant violation of Security Council resolutions and present a clear challenge to the global non-proliferation regime. This is simply not acceptable. Japan strongly urges North Korea to refrain from further provocations and violations and to comply faithfully and fully with the relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 2321 (2016) and 2270 (2016), as well as its other commitments.

The threat of WMD proliferation is also evident in Syria, with the actual use of chemical weapons. Japan strongly condemn such acts, which are not permissible under any circumstances.

In the light of these clear and present threats, it is the responsibility of every State to protect itself and its people by strengthening international and domestic

non-proliferation measures. Malicious actors are misusing rapid advances in science, technology and international commerce for proliferation purposes. Proliferation activities must be prevented whenever and wherever they are attempted. States must be all the more vigilant, as their people and entities can unwittingly become complicit in proliferation activities. Japan strongly believes that enhancing the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), especially the obligations set forth in the resolution related to domestic and export control, is imperative. Let me reiterate that resolution 2325 (2016) calls upon States that have not done so to start developing effective national control lists.

State capacity-building is key for further implementation because proliferation can occur through the weakest link. The Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and its Group of Experts can help States strengthen their domestic non-proliferation systems by, for example, sharing expertise to formulate national implementation action plans and clarifying actual assistance needs. Facilitating direct interactions between Member States and the Committee will strongly bolster the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

This year, Japan disbursed $1 million to the Trust Fund to support the work of the 1540 Committee. A significant portion will be used to finance these types of direct interactions. Japan urges interested States to contact the Committee and would also be happy to relay any message to the Committee as the Coordinator of the Working Group on Monitoring and National Implementation.

In today's security environment, we must urgently strengthen the non-proliferation regime at the global, regional and national levels. Japan will continue to actively support these endeavours.

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China appreciates Bolivia's holding of today's meeting. I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Izumi Nakamitsu and Mr. Joseph Ballard of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons for their briefings.

China appreciates the role played by Bolivia as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). The non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and their means of delivery bears on international peace, security and stability. It is a common challenge and a major task facing the international community and an important component part of global governance. In recent years, thanks to the joint efforts of the international community, the international consensus on non-proliferation has grown in depth and the relevant mechanisms have kept improving. Countries have scaled up capacity-building in non-proliferation and deepened cooperation in this area.

Reviewing past experience in international non-proliferation, we can draw the following four lessons.

First, seeking common security is a fundamental way to advance international non-proliferation. Creating a peaceful and stable international environment, building security architecture that features fairness, justice, joint contributions and shared benefits, and seeking common security for all countries represent the ultimate guarantee for the elimination of the driving forces of terrorism and proliferation.

Secondly, justice and balance constitute the basic principles in advancing international non-proliferation. Unilateralism, double standards and discriminatory practices are detrimental to the authority and effectiveness of the international non-proliferation regime. While fulfilling their non-proliferation obligations, countries are entitled to peacefully enjoy the fruits of scientific and technological development.

Thirdly, leveraging the role of the international non-proliferation regime is an important guarantee for the advancement of international non-proliferation. The threat of WMD proliferation knows no borders. On the basis of the universal participation of and democratic consultation among countries, having the United Nations and the relevant international organizations coordinate in non-proliferation efforts can help strengthen and optimize the international non-proliferation regime.

Fourthly, dialogue and cooperation are the most effective way to advance international non-proliferation. Confrontation, the focus on sanctions and pressure can only lead to the escalation and overspill of conflicts, thereby further exacerbating the risk of proliferation. Dialogue, consultation and seeking peaceful settlements of regional hotspot issues of proliferation through political and diplomatic means can produce more durable and effective results. Over the past several years, the international non-proliferation situation has remained

serious with certain regional hotspot issues concerning proliferation defying a solution. Technological progress has lowered the threshold of proliferation, and the risk of non-State actors, especially terrorists, acquiring WMDs and related materials has increased.

The international community needs to work together and do a better job in the following areas of global non-proliferation governance.

First, we need to build political consensus and a process for addressing both the symptoms and root causes of the problem. We need to abandon the Cold War mentality; establish a new concept of common, integrated, cooperative and sustainable security; improve the security environment of all countries; and eradicate the breeding grounds of terrorism and proliferation activities as soon as possible. At the same time, there is a need to comprehensively implement non-proliferation obligations and political commitment in that regard, and commit ourselves to combating the existing threats of proliferation.

Secondly, we need to strengthen national responsibility and build a line of defence against proliferation. National Governments bear the primary responsibility for non-proliferation. We need to respect and provide support to countries — based on their specific circumstances — in their efforts to formulate non-proliferation policies, improve legal and regulatory systems on non-proliferation and enhance capacity-building in non-proliferation law enforcement with a view to building a strong line of defence.

Thirdly we need to deepen international cooperation and enhance non-proliferation capacity. All countries must actively participate in global non-proliferation governance, while ensuring the respect for the sovereignty of all countries engaged in exchanges and mutual learning, as well as pragmatic cooperation in an open, inclusive, mutually beneficial and win-win spirit so as to improve the capacity and the level of non-proliferation of all countries. The needs of developing countries for international systems in non-proliferation should be effectively met.

Fourthly, we need to take a multipronged approach to implement resolution 1540 (2004) comprehensively and effectively. Resolution 1540 (2004) was the first of its kind adopted by the Security Council specifically concerning non-proliferation, and it represents the common understanding of all countries in connection with non-proliferation. The Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) needs to strictly abide by the mandate conferred upon it by the resolution, continue to take forward the spirit of cooperation, focus on strengthening its assistance function so as to enhance the awareness and capacity of Member States in implementing the resolution and promote international cooperation in the area of non-proliferation.

China resolutely opposes the proliferation of WMDs and their means of delivery, and has always strictly fulfilled its international non-proliferation obligations. We have taken an active part in regional and international non-proliferation cooperation, worked hard to promote the political settlement of hotspot issues in the area of non-proliferation and supported the United Nations while playing a key role in that regard.

In September 2015 in Qingdao, China, in cooperation with the 1540 Committee, hosted the first training course for the points of contact in the Asia-Pacific region, which yielded positive results. In August, China, also in cooperation with the 1540 Committee, will co-host another training course in China. We believe that that training course will play a constructive role in helping the concerned parties build capacity in the area of non-proliferation. China will continue to work with all parties to contribute to the improvement of the international non-proliferation regime, the strengthening of global non-proliferation governance and the maintenance of international peace and security

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statement to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version.

I also wish to inform all concerned that, with the consent of the members of the Security Council, I will suspend this meeting between 1 p.m. and 2 p.m.

I now welcome and give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Montenegro.

Mr. Darmanović (Montenegro): I would like to thank the Bolivian presidency for organizing this timely open debate on the global efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) by non-State actors and for preparing an informative concept note (see S/2016/1038). I also thank the briefers for their input at today's debate.

Montenegro aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union, as well as with the statement to be made on behalf of the Group of Friends of Resolution 1540 (2004). I would, however, like to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

We have witnessed the security, health, environmental and social effects of testing nuclear weapons. The nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and putative further technological developments in its pursuit of military nuclear capability pose a serious threat to international peace and security. Montenegro condemns in the strongest terms the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's repeated violations of the relevant Security Council resolutions. Allegations of the use of chemical weapons in Syria, Iraq and Malaysia, and the possible existence of residual capabilities on Syrian territory, increase the risk of the proliferation of such weapons and their falling into the hands of terrorist groups. We have to face the fact that this imminent threat requires our immediate action so as to avert consequences of a global scale.

Montenegro supports the global agenda for the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), as set out in resolution 2325 (2016). At the national level, we take a proactive and comprehensive approach in trying to contribute to regional efforts in addressing this urgent threat. As a State party to all key international agreements and instruments related to WMD proliferation and their means of delivery, Montenegro has established a solid national framework and built administrative and institutional capacities to address the threat efficiently. We were the first country in the Western Balkans to adopt a strategy for the non-proliferation of WMDs for the period between 2016 and 2020. In Montenegro, through the implementation of that strategy and the implementation of all accompanying action plans — including the action plan for resolution 1540 (2004) and the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear action plan — our focus is on taking a number of measures at the national level that ensure full compliance with the relevant Security Council resolutions, thereby contributing to regional efforts in addressing that threat.

Aware of the fact that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is closely related to other aspects of arms control in general, our attention is on the effective enforcement of legislation and the establishment of domestic control. In that context, we have established an effective export control system, while taking into account measures, such as those regarding intangible technology transfers and other matters requiring particular vigilance, including the transfer of the sensitive facilities, equipment, technology and material usable as weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

We firmly believe that putting an emphasis on the universality of the international provisions on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction derives from the fact that even small States that do not possess nuclear capacities or industries are an important part of the security architecture, which aims at controlling the use of sensitive materials for peaceful purposes.

The threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors is a global one, which requires a response at the national, regional and international levels. We are confident that, only through the joint and coherent efforts of the international community, including increased cooperation between the United Nations and the relevant international and regional organizations, as well as among the relevant Security Council Committees and active participation of all stakeholders — parliamentarians, civil society, industry and academia — this threat of grave concern can be effectively addressed. Montenegro stands ready to make a further contribution in that regard.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Panama.

Ms. Flores Herrera (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, Sir, let me commend your leadership of the Security Council this month. We are grateful for the concept note and thank Ms. Nakamitsu and Mr. Ballard for their briefings at today's relevant debate, which, once again, draws the attention of the Council to the growing threat of the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction throughout the world.

Panama aligns itself with the statements to be made by the Permanent Representative of Spain, on behalf of the Group of Friends of Resolution 1540 (2004), and by the Permanent Representative of Venezuela, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

As a country that is fully committed to strengthening the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, Panama reaffirms its commitment to resolution 2325 (2016) and the ongoing fight against the proliferation of nuclear,

chemical and biological weapons and their delivery systems because it believes that they pose a serious threat to international peace and security, in particular when in the hands of non-State actors.

Panama attaches particular importance to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to resolution 1540 (2004) because they are the only legally binding multilateral instruments currently in force that address global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. As a member of the Human Security Network, whose chairmanship we recently assumed, Panama promotes the safety and security of all of the world's citizens and their right to a life of freedom and dignity, free of threats, so that they can exert their true potential. Based on that premise, we must combat the cruel threat posed by weapons of mass destruction.

In February, Latin America and the Caribbean celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco — the first regional agreement on disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons that gave rise to the first nuclear-free zone, which has retained that status. Today, under our region's proven leadership, we welcome the progress made by the United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination. We believe that Ambassador Elayne Whyte Gómez will steer the conference to a successful outcome.

Panama reiterated its commitment to non-proliferation in 1999 by signing the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and, 21 years after its adoption, urges that greater efforts be made to achieve its universalization and entry into force, through a commitment by all States, without standards or exceptions. Although Panama does not import, manufacture or stockpile weapons of mass destruction or nuclear weapons, it is fully aware of the emerging trends in proliferation through scientific and technological advances and in international trade that could be vulnerable to the risk of the possession and use of such weapons by non-State actors. That is why we have been adopting and strengthening a series of practical measures.

As a country that is pivotal to logistics and global transit, with a larger Panama Canal, it has even greater challenges and responsibilities. That is why we are stepping up efforts to assist in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). Our geographic location, marine biodiversity and the advantages of the connectivity that Panama offers are all assets, but also pose security challenges, which our country is addressing.

We have worked to draft modern legislation that allows us to prevent, combat and punish the financing of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We have adopted a national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) for the period 2016-2019 to regulate dual use materials. We have established a National Coordination Council against International Terrorism, which is interinstitutional and has the support of international experts from the Organization of American States and the United Nations. In addition, Panama is part of the Global Container Control Programme, which is a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and World Customs Organization initiative. It was implemented to facilitate information-sharing and cooperation among participating countries in order to limit the use of maritime containers for transnational organized crime. At the regional level, Panama chairs the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism, which we hope will continue to enhance constructive efforts and cooperation as we stress that they are fundamental to addressing this grave challenge.

My Government firmly condemns the recent launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea because they are in flagrant violation of Security Council resolutions and merely heighten tensions in the region. In that regard, we have reiterated that the manufacture and use of nuclear weapons cannot continue to be used as a political tool to assign power in the world. The humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons is irreversible and unquantifiable. The global development of such weapons is measured not only by the number of human lives that are directly affected, but also by the amount of resources diverted, which then make it impossible to meet the aspirations of the well-being of humankind. We cannot continue to shirk that responsibility.

In conclusion, I underscore the importance of maintaining a multidimensional approach to security in the light of the human rights/development nexus, which is indispensable to building a peaceful and safe world. Nuclear disarmament must be a global imperative that, with the necessary political will, can promote peace and free up billions of dollars for sustainable development. In that regard, the commitments outlined here today encourage us to continue the fight, which is a struggle for humankind, the future and present and

future generations, including the young people who are with me today and who will take part in the meeting convened by the President of the General Assembly on education, as part of the efforts to improve the quality of education in Panama.

Sir, you have Panama's ongoing support in ensuring that the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) continues to fulfil its overarching goal of encouraging global efforts to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in all its aspects.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Chile.

Mr. Labbé (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the Permanent Representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Ambassador Sacha Llorentty Soliz, in his double capacity as President of the Security Council and as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), for convening today's important debate on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors.

We welcome the briefings delivered by the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, and the Senior Officer from the Office of Strategy and Policy of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Mr. Joseph Ballard.

Chile aligns itself with the statement to be made by the representative of Spain on behalf of the Group of Friends of Resolution 1540.

Today's debate could not be more timely. It is being held as a treaty is being negotiated in this very building to prohibit weapons of mass destruction. The most recent category of weapons of mass destruction, which is contrary to international law, in particular international humanitarian law, has still not been expressly prohibited by a convention. There is no doubt that such a convention would help to strengthen the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

One of the key components of the non-proliferation architecture is resolution 1540 (2004), which was unanimously adopted on 28 April 2004 and represents a historic milestone, to which Chile was proud to contribute at the time as a non-permanent member of the Council. It is indeed the first resolution of the Council under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations that established concrete measures to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery on the part of non-State actors. In that sense, resolution 1540 (2004) is today an instrument of prime importance that provides a specific framework for States to combat more effectively the terrorist threat linked to the proliferation of such weapons.

Likewise, we especially value the final document on the 2016 comprehensive review of the status of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) (see S/2016/1038, carried out under the leadership of Spain and which is endorsed in resolution 2325 (2016), adopted by the Security Council on 15 December 2016.

It is important to note that current global trends are intensifying proliferation threats. For example, globalization and increased trade in components and in trans-shipment, accelerating technological advances and the facilitation of the intangible transfer of technologies, shell companies, overseas procurement networks and black-market distribution networks must all be considered in developing effective measures against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and dual-use components.

Strategic controls are key to preventing important technologies from reaching the hands of non-State actors. Proliferation agents attack the weaknesses of the existing control and commercial distribution chains. That is why resolution 1540 (2004) requires States to adopt and enforce effective measures to establish national controls aimed at preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their related materials.

We are convinced that strengthening national capacities, assistance and cooperation are essential to progress in the implementation of existing measures and in considering future actions. Therefore, Chile, together with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and the Office for Disarmament Affairs, organized a training course for focal points in Latin America and the Caribbean that are responsible for its implementation, which was held in Santiago from 24 to 28 October of last year.

The use of chemical weapons or toxic chemicals by non-State actors is no longer just a threat, but a worrying reality, as confirmed by the research of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. In conclusion, we hope that those results will deter those who are determined to use chemical weapons in the future.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Mr. Gómez Camacho (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Mr. President, and Bolivia for convening this important meeting. Allow me to start by reiterating the obvious. We must strengthen the collective response through cooperation and international law in order to address the increasing risk of weapons capable of wiping out entire communities through cruel, indiscriminate effects, as well as the risk that they may fall into the hands of non-State actors and terrorist groups.

Mexico categorically condemns the existence of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and their use by any actor under any circumstance. This meeting coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and shows that a world free of nuclear weapons is a goal within our reach. As the concept note prepared for the previous Council meeting on this topic in December indicates (S/2016/1013, annex), the extraordinary advances in science and technology and the dynamism of international trade should not threaten our security. Our challenge is to find a balance that will enable us to meet our non-proliferation commitments, while avoiding obstacles to trade, technology and our own industries.

Mexico is a responsible global actor and a country that rejects weapons of mass destruction, as well as being the world's leading recipient of foreign direct investment in its aerospace industry. With one of the largest chemical industries in the world, we have developed a national export-control regime for dual-use materials, based on coordinated efforts generating firm, flexible and sophisticated responses, thereby enabling us to fulfil our international obligations under resolution 1540 (2004), and those under our voluntary memberships, including the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Australia Group and the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

But such efforts are of little or no use if we do not strengthen our national capacities and if we do not engage in real-time information exchange and continuous cooperation among States. In those efforts, the leadership of the Security Council is essential, as is the commitment of the five permanent members. The review of the status of resolution 1540 (2004) by the Council last year, under the leadership of Spain, highlighted the urgent need to strengthen our collective efforts.

Two weeks ago, in collaboration with Germany, the 1540 Committee Group of Experts and the Office for Disarmament Affairs, Mexico hosted a successful meeting on the Wiesbaden process that enabled us to share our experience and good practices with the countries of the Pacific Ocean Alliance and with Brazil. Industry representatives from those countries participated in awareness-raising with regard to the diversion of dual-use goods and technologies for proliferation purposes. Important efforts that are critical to ensuring a safer region are taking place in Latin America.

Multilateralism and the United Nations remain key in addressing the risks of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their materials and in forging the secure world that we all desire.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. Tenya Hasegawa (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to thank Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu and Mr. Joseph Ballard for their informative briefings today.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Spain on behalf of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004). We would also like to add a few comments in our national capacity.

My delegation is grateful for this opportunity to engage in dialogue on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as for the efforts undertaken by the chairmanship of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), currently held by the Plurinational State of Bolivia, with a view to strengthening international cooperation on this very important issue.

Peru believes that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems represents one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. The situation has deteriorated in recent years, with an increased likelihood of non-State actors, in particular terrorist groups, developing, acquiring or using such weapons and their means of delivery, or trading in them. The threat is real, as we have seen in recent instances, and has been facilitated by rapid advances in science and technology as well as by the expansion of international trade.

Spurred on by this realization, Peru co-sponsored resolutions 1540 (2004) and 2325 (2016), which we deem

vital instruments for promoting the urgently needed universalization and comprehensive implementation of the multilateral treaties aimed at preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, we consider it imperative to develop and implement national legislation so as effectively to monitor the illicit trade in such weapons and their components and delivery systems.

In that connection, we would underscore that Peru has made considerable efforts to meet its obligations under the resolutions I mentioned — in terms of nuclear safety, radiological security and the physical protection of nuclear material. As set out in the reports we have submitted, we have adapted our legislation and taken various criminal and administrative measures to ensure effective migration and customs control in the aerial and maritime areas.

Peru believes, moreover, that efforts to address the threat of such weapons falling into the hands of non-State actors must go hand in hand with greater cooperation at the subregional and regional levels, with the goal of prevention and of the transfer of technology for peaceful purposes. That was the stance taken recently by Peru at the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) Regional Industry Outreach Conference for the Pacific Alliance States and Brazil, organized recently by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs in Mexico City last June.

By the same token, we believe it vital to ensure accurate, predictable and coherent action by those bodies charged with implementing the non-proliferation regime, in particular the Security Council. Another key challenge facing the international legal regime on that issue is the imperative need to eliminate the weapons of mass destruction currently held by various States. That is a long-standing aspiration of the international community whose realization will require greater involvement on the part of civil society and the scientific community, including non-governmental organizations, in our efforts to foster understanding of and outreach on the obligations borne by States under resolution 1540 (2004) and other related instruments.

To conclude, Peru reaffirms its unstinting commitment to complying with international norms aimed at ensuring the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as its concomitant international cooperation and coordination efforts, with the ultimate goal of setting the world free from the daunting threat of such weapons.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Israel.

Mr. Roet (Israel): The alarming threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to non-State actors continues to grow. Advances in science and technology, alongside the evolving nature of terror, present challenges never before seen.

To stop the proliferation of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons to ill-intentioned actors, the Security Council adopted resolution 1540 (2004), the only legally binding document dedicated specifically to the non-proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery to non-State actors, especially terrorists. Israel understands the severity of this issue first-hand, as our citizens live under constant threat, both conventional and unconventional. As such, we consider the non-proliferation of WMD a top priority.

In recent years, the absolute norm against the use of chemical weapons has been eroded and challenged time and again. Failing States have transformed the Middle East region into a breeding ground for terrorists. The recklessness of some States has aggravated the threat of proliferation of WMD to non-State actors.

The Al-Assad regime's systematic use of chemical weapons has incentivized terrorists and non-State actors to obtain the materials and know-how to produce and deploy WMD. It is clear, therefore, that the responsibility for the proliferation of chemical weapons in Syria lies squarely at the feet of Al-Assad.

The United Nations-Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) found both the Al-Assad regime and Da'esh guilty of employing chemical weapons against innocent civilians. Last fall, after the JIM concluded that the Syrian regime was responsible for three chemical attacks, some in the international community had hoped this finding would deter Al-Assad from continuing to carry out such horrible attacks. But, sadly, they were wrong.

On 4 April, at 6:30 a.m., the Al-Assad regime bombarded the people of Khan Shaykhun, a small town in the Hama area, with air strikes including sarin gas. As a first responder recalled:

> "I saw something I had never seen in my life ... children trying to breathe a gasp of air, with saliva and foam coming out of their mouths and nostrils".

With approximately 100 people killed and hundreds more wounded that morning, the attack on Khan Shaykhun is the latest example of the repeated abuses committed against innocent Syrians since 2013. The Al-Assad regime's systematic use of chemical weapons must be stopped.

Resolution 1540 (2004) prohibits the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery. The development and testing of ballistic missiles increases the risk of proliferation of this means of delivery. Having developed and fired ballistic missiles consistently since the adoption of resolution 2231 (2015), Iran has done its part to increase this global threat.

On 18 and 19 June, Iran fired six Zulfiqar surface-to-surface missiles and one Qiam medium-range missile at the Deir ez-Zor area in Syria, claiming to have been targeting Da'esh. Following these launches, Sheikh Hussein Islam, an adviser to Iran's Foreign Minister, made Iran's true intention clear. He stated:

> "Israel is the main enemy of Iran. I think [Israel] understood the message. It now has to worry."

The international community must understand this message. It cannot ignore such a direct threat by one Member State against another.

Today I shall use this forum to present new information outlining yet another unacceptable, blatant threat by Iran against Israel. This information has only recently come to light. Last December, Iran conducted a launch test of the Qiam, a Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) category 1 missile that can carry a nuclear warhead. The missile landed very close to the target: a bullseye shaped like a Star of David. This use of the Star of David, the symbol of the Jewish people, for target practice is hateful and unacceptable.

In the light of Iran's missile launches, support for terror and bolstering of Al-Assad's murderous regime, the Security Council must guarantee Iran's full compliance with the relevant resolutions, especially on the eve of the Security Council's briefing on non-proliferation.

Over the years, Israel has taken extensive steps to implement resolution 1540 (2004). Israel has joined the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 and supports the statement delivered by the representative of Spain on behalf of the Group today. The Israeli Government has instituted intelligence-gathering and intelligence-sharing improvements in border control and the development of advanced detection and identification devices. Israel has also enhanced facility and relevant dual-use material security as well as the strengthening of export controls. We believe that this multipronged strategy is key to the successful implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

Finally, the international community must take clear action to counter State-sponsored proliferation and the proliferation of WMD to terrorists. Israel is fully committed to serving as an active partner in this international effort.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Pakistan.

Ms. Lodhi (Pakistan): Let me begin by expressing the appreciation of my delegation for your personal efforts, Sir, in leading the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and for holding this open debate.

I also thank the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and the representative of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for their statements.

Pakistan aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The debate on global efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors is important and timely. It needs to be situated within the larger non-proliferation context. Resolution 1540 (2004) has emerged as an important instrument in the global non-proliferation architecture, as it seeks to prevent non-State actors from acquiring or using weapons of mass destruction. It has made a useful contribution to the advancement of our shared non-proliferation goals.

While two recent successes, first in the Disarmament Commission and then the agreement reached on objectives and the agenda for a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, are encouraging. However, other aspects of the disarmament and non-proliferation landscape do not evoke similar optimism. Some nuclear-weapon States are not willing to give up their large inventories

of nuclear weapons or their modernization programmes, even as they pursue non-proliferation with great zeal, purposively ignoring the fact that disarmament and non-proliferation are organically linked.

Further progress may be impeded by recent developments, including the fact that one of the five permanent mebers of the Security Council has vowed to greatly strengthen and expand nuclear capabilities by outmatching and outlasting potential competitors. That would renew a nuclear arms race, in flagrant disregard of the basic principles enshrined at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Another key challenge to long-held non-proliferation norms and rules remains the granting of discriminatory waivers to some nations, thereby creating exceptions based on power or profit motives. Such special arrangements carry obvious proliferation risks and open up the possibility of the diversion of material intended for peaceful uses to military purposes, in addition, of course, to undermining regional strategic stability.

With regard to the implementation of the resolution, the importance of staying one step ahead of non-State actors who seek to kill and maim innocent people by using weapons of mass destruction, especially in view of the rapid advancements in science and technology, cannot be overstated. Effective cooperation is the only way to proceed in that matter. It is imperative to leverage the cooperative approach and the spirit of national ownership that resolution 1540 (2004) engenders.

Pakistan has been a consistent supporter of the objectives of resolution 1540 (2004), and our commitment to its implementation is, we believe, exemplary. We have submitted five national implementation reports, the latest only last month. Over the years, Pakistan has acquired considerable experience and expertise in the safe and secure utilization of nuclear energy, as well as in the application of chemistry and biology for peaceful purposes.

With regard to assistance in particular, our latest implementation report notes Pakistan's readiness to offer assistance, in collaboration with the 1540 Committee, to interested States for capacity-building, technical assistance and training in the following areas: regulatory infrastructure in export controls and the safety and security of nuclear and radioactive materials; commodity identification training for enforcement officials; training for licensing officers; internal compliance; industry outreach and public awareness-raising; and academic and specialized courses in the field of nuclear safety and nuclear security, assistance and protection courses related to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, as well as chemical safety and security.

Pakistan also hosted a two-day regional seminar on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) in Islamabad in March 2017, in which representatives from 18 countries and officials from the International Atomic Energy Agency, the OPCW and INTERPOL actively participated. The seminar also emphasized the key role of assistance aimed at strengthening the implementation of the resolution.

However, the real value of such assistance will remain limited at best until we transform the process from one that is donor-driven to the one that caters to the actual needs of the States in need of help and assistance.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that as the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) deliberates on the legal, technical and political aspects of the membership of countries that are not party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), it must establish and adhere to transparent, objective and non-discriminatory criteria that ensures equal treatment of non-NPT applicants for the Group's membership, thereby strengthening, and not weakening, the non-proliferation regime.

Pakistan's strong credentials as an active partner in global non-proliferation efforts has established its eligibility to become a member of the NSG.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Archbishop Bernardito Cleopas Auza, Permanent Observer of the Observer State of the Holy See to the United Nations.

Archbishop Auza: Preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and of their means of delivery constitutes a common challenge facing the international community and is a key element in global governance and international peace and security.

It has been nearly six months since the Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2325 (2016), on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. However, the situation has not, in our view, substantially changed, because, as Pope Francis has stated, we may say, "never again", but at the same time we produce

weapons and sell them to those who are at war with one another. The Pope would like to remind us that it is an absurd contradiction to speak of peace and to negotiate peace, while at the same time promoting or permitting the arms trade. He invites national leaders to commit themselves firmly to ending the arms trade, which victimizes so many innocent people, and he reiterates his strong support for the rapid adoption of steps that would lead to the elimination of weapons of mass destruction and to the reduction of the world's reliance on armed force in the conduct of national and international affairs.

The principal legally binding instrument currently available for combating the proliferation threat is resolution 1540 (2004), adopted unanimously more than a decade ago. That resolution's preventive role and the 1540 Committee's efforts in the five areas of its work, namely, implementation, assistance, cooperation, transparency and dissemination, are fundamental in guiding the actions of all States in seeking to pool efforts to combat proliferation.

In that regard, my delegation would like to reiterate that it is essential to improve assistance to States and cooperation among them, if we are to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It is necessary to increase the coordination of national, regional and international efforts, as appropriate, so as to strengthen our response to that serious challenge. All States ought to take appropriate measures,in accordance with national and international law, and they ought to fulfil scrupulously their obligations under international law and the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. The establishment of zones free of weapons of mass destruction would also be a big step in the right direction, as it would demonstrate that we can indeed move toward a universal agreement to eliminate all such weapons.

The proliferation of weapons, both conventional and those of mass destruction, aggravates conflict situations and results in huge human and material costs that profoundly undermine development and the search for lasting peace. Indeed, non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament underpin global security and sustainable development. Without them, the achievement of the much-vaunted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will be seriously jeopardized, peace will continue to be dangerously in grave deficit and human sufferings will sadly remain unabated.

It is imperative, therefore, that all State actors overcome their differences and find political solutions that can prevent and halt the involvement of non-State actors in wars and conflicts. Otherwise, the human cost of wars and conflicts will continue to grow and the proliferation of biological, chemical and nuclear weapons, along with their delivery systems and the risk of their use by States or terrorist groups, will remain very clear and present dangers.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Estonia.

Mr. Jürgenson (Estonia): Estonia aligns itself with the statement to be made by the observer of the European Union.

First, we would like to thank Bolivia for convening an open debate on this relevant topic, which is more pressing than ever. We fully agree that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security. Such threats are continuously evolving, owing, inter alia, to rapid developments in science, technology and international commerce. The risk of State or non-State actors, particularly terrorists, seeking to develop or acquiring weapons of mass destruction is especially worrisome and, unfortunately, we have already seen those risks materializing.

Toxic chemicals have repeatedly been used as weapons in Syria, and new credible allegations have been reported by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). The OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism attributed the responsibility for the series of chemical-weapon attacks to both the Syrian armed forces and the terrorists. The threatening and destabilizing actions by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea represent a serious threat to international peace and security and undermine the global non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

We therefore need to redouble our efforts at the national, regional and global levels to prevent non-State actors from acquiring sensitive materials and technologies. We believe that the key to effective counter-proliferation is universal adherence and the full implementation of multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements. We also must strive to make progress towards strengthening the existing instruments and regimes. We strongly support the multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms-control treaties, such as the Biological and

Toxin Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We also stand ready for the immediate commencement and early conclusion of the negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We welcome the establishment of the high-level expert preparatory group whose mandate it is to make recommendations on substantive elements for a future treaty.

Resolution 1540 (2004) remains the fundamental pillar and a key preventive instrument for a cooperative approach aimed at helping Member States to develop capabilities to face evolving threats in the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. I would like to reaffirm Estonia's readiness to implement, in a proactive manner, resolution 1540 (2004), as urged in resolution 2325 (2016) and the comprehensive review report (see S/2016/1038). We believe that effective implementation entails effective legal enforcement and export controls. We also attach high importance to the existing multilateral export-control regimes. We continue to contribute to a number of global and regional non-proliferation initiatives, such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the Proliferation Security Initiative. We also continue to support resolution 1540 (2004) by sharing our experience and knowledge in the area of the export control of dual-use items. Every step promoting transparency and greater responsibility contributes to the broader capacity-building of interested States.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. João Pedro Vale de Almeida, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

Mr. Vale de Almeida: I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The following countries align themselves with this statement: the candidate countries Turkey, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia.

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to you, Mr. President, for convening this debate and for putting this important issue on the agenda of our meeting today. That is a clear and welcome sign of the Security Council's continued engagement in support of resolution 1540 (2004) and its determination to drive forward the implementation of last year's comprehensive review of that resolution.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is a growing threat to international peace and security. It puts at risk the security of our States and our peoples. Some States have sought, or are seeking, the means and technology to develop weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. The risk that terrorists could acquire such weapons is particularly worrisome. That should be a cause of serious concern for all of us.

The international community needs to respond firmly. In the European Union's view, our response should be based on a number of principles. First of all, we must continue to address the root causes of instability. Secondly, multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements must be upheld and strengthened. Thirdly, multilateral institutions, especially those dealing with verification and compliance, deserve our full support. Fourthly, export-control lists and regimes play an important role in stemming proliferation. Finally, we must mainstream non-proliferation into our overall policies, resources and instruments.

The European Union's global strategy, issued one year ago, provides the foundation for the EU to continue, and even step up, its efforts in the coming years. In line with the global strategy, we strongly support the multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms-control treaties and regimes, and we will use every means at our disposal to assist in resolving proliferation crises, as we successfully did with the Iranian nuclear programme.

The EU and its member States believe that resolution 1540 (2004) remains a central pillar of the international non-proliferation architecture. Resolution 1540 (2004) has become even more important in the current security environment, which is characterized by acute and diffuse threats, and where external and internal security issues must be seen and tackled together.

We are therefore pleased to see that the comprehensive review conducted in 2016 reaffirmed the centrality, importance and authority of resolution 1540 (2004) in the multilateral non-proliferation architecture. All 28 EU member States sponsored the new resolution 2325 (2016), which the Security Council unanimously adopted on 15 December 2016. I would

like to warmly congratulate my Spanish colleagues for their outstanding work on that topic.

As a follow-up to the comprehensive review and the adoption of resolution 2325 (2016), last month the EU Council adopted a decision in support of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). That new EU Council decision is an ambitious funding scheme designed to help implement the outcome of the comprehensive review. Based on our fruitful cooperation in the past, we will again ask the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs to perform the role of implementing partner for this project. The new scheme extends over a three-year period and is worth more than €2.6 million.

Through the new Council decision, we will support cooperation and capacity-building, both nationally and at the regional level. We will pay special attention to the role of industry and support the relevant initiatives. Last but not least, we are keen to foster closer cooperation between EU-funded projects implemented by the Office for Disarmament Affairs and by other regional organizations, such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and those implemented by the European Commission through our centres of excellence.

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm the readiness of the European Union and its 28 member States to implement in a proactive manner the outcome of the 2016 comprehensive review of resolution 1540 (2004). We will do so in close cooperation with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and in partnership with all United Nations States Members and with other non-governmental stakeholders.

The proliferation challenges are multifaceted and complex, and its consequences extremely worrying. But, working together, we can succeed in preventing the worst-case scenario from happening.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Poland

Mr. Winid (Poland): Poland aligns itself with the statement just delivered by the observer of the European Union and with the statement delivered by the Chair of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004). My delegation would like to make some additional comments from our national perspective.

We thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this open debate and for your first quarterly message in your capacity as the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), which was circulated in May. The ability of non-State actors to acquire and use weapons of mass destruction poses a continuous and real threat to global security and to the non-proliferation regime.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) — one of the most universal treaties in the field of disarmament. However, it is with grave concern that we are following the recurring cases of the use of chemical weapons in Syria and Iraq. Reports by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism have confirmed that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham was among those responsible for horrific attacks on civilian populations over the past few years. Any use of chemical weapons strikes at the very foundations on which the CWC has been built.

Although the OPCW is not an anti-terrorist organization, Poland believes it has the potential to counter the threat of the misuse of toxic chemicals by non-State actors. The OPCW position against terrorism can be strengthened by the full implementation of CWC provisions by States Parties. Poland also supports OPCW cooperation with other international stakeholders, including the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and the 1540 Committee.

Half a year ago, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2325 (2016), which Poland had the honour to support and co-sponsor. It was the culmination of the six-month-long comprehensive review of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and identified the strengths and areas for the improvement of the resolution. The resolution drew conclusions on the evolving nature of the risk of proliferation and the rapid advances in science and technology that might influence the non-proliferation regime. We fully share the approach taken in resolution 2325 (2016), which states that more attention should be paid by States to enforcement measures, to measures relating to biological, chemical and nuclear weapons, and to national export and transshipment controls.

As you have accurately pointed out, Mr. President,

> "Experience shows that taking full advantage of direct interactions with Member States is the best way to achieve sustainable and measurable results with regard to effective implementation of the resolution".

We therefore commend Chile, China and the Russian Federation, which hosted regional courses for the 1540 contact points. Based on our own experience, we understand how important it is to develop cooperation at the regional level in implementing resolution 1540 (2004). We also repeat our readiness to assist other States, at their request, in their capacity-building efforts.

Some simple steps may significantly strengthen non-proliferation. To name just the basic ones — we encourage the remaining 16 States to submit their national implementation plans with regard to resolution 1540 (2004). We also call on States that have not yet done so to accede to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

Poland welcomes enhanced cooperation between the 1540 Committee and international organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. We encourage Member States to develop direct engagement with the 1540 Committee and with other relevant forums, such as the Global Partnership, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Australian Group, the European Union Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence Initiative, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Global Initiative to Counter Nuclear Terrorism and the Proliferation Security Initiative.

In conclusion, I wish to state that my country has traditionally been a firm advocate of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction at all levels. We stand ready to cooperate with all actors interested in strengthening the non-proliferation regime and security for all in a world free of weapons of mass destruction. Resolution 1540 (2004) plays a pivotal role in achieving that goal. I can therefore assure you of our full support, Mr. President, as well as of our support for the work of the 1540 Committee.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Norway.

Mr. Pedersen (Norway): I have the privilege of speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, namely, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and my own country, Norway.

Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and subsequent resolutions, such as resolution 2325 (2016), supplement agreements on disarmament and on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). It fills a critical gap in terms of preventing non-State actors, notably terrorist groups, from developing, acquiring, manufacturing, possessing, transporting, transferring or using nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery. The resolution's continued relevance is underscored by recent reports of use of chemical weapons in Iraq and Syria.

Efforts to prevent non-State actors, including terrorists, from acquiring and using weapons of mass destruction is an ongoing process. Hence, we agree with the President's view that the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) is a long-term task. It requires the continued vigilance and active participation of all relevant stakeholders, such as States Members of the United Nations, relevant international and regional organizations, the private sector and other civil-society partners. Our efforts must be dynamic. New threats are emerging, such as cyberthreats relating to weapons of mass destruction. The biological and chemical sectors require more attention, as significant gaps remain there as well.

It is crucial that we take into account the rapid pace of technological development. Technological advances may, on the one hand, facilitate our efforts to implement resolution 1540 (2004), but new technologies may also lead to new threats. It is therefore important that we continuously update our tool box for combating WMD terrorism. That must be an important task for the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), as well as for the Council itself during its regular deliberations on WMD-related issues. States that have the necessary legislation and enforcement measures in place are better placed to benefit from ongoing technological advances. Hence, the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) also contributes to social and economic progress.

The comprehensive review of resolution 1540 (2004), undertaken last year, showed that considerable progress has been made in both the outreach and the implementation of the resolution. Initial reporting from Member States has clearly improved, but progress

has been uneven. We need to do more to ensure that domestic legislation and enforcement measures are adequate for addressing the current challenges. That is primarily a national responsibility, but the Nordic countries recognize the need for international support and assistance, and we provide such support in various ways.

Since its adoption by the Security Council, resolution 1540 (2004) has become more firmly anchored within the United Nations system and is complemented by work under relevant multilateral treaties. Such extensive ownership is crucial, since no nation is immune to WMD terrorism. Over the past decade, a broader international architecture of initiatives and partnerships has emerged to fight WMD terrorism. It is of the greatest importance that all such efforts be mutually supportive.

The Nordic countries are active in the broader partnership. We have contributed financially to the Secretariat's work on resolution 1540 (2004). At the latest Nuclear Security Summit, held in Washington, D.C., in 2016, individual Nordic countries made national pledges, such as working towards minimizing the use of highly enriched uranium in the civilian sector and enhancing the nuclear-detection architecture. We are also engaged in long-standing technical cooperation with several countries on both nuclear safety and nuclear security. Other examples of relevant cooperation projects include the training of chemists from developing countries and assisting States in building their capacity to prevent and counter biological threats.

Resolution 1540 (2004) is clearly a key component of the international security architecture. We must all strive towards its full and global implementation.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. Vieira (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Sir, for organizing this open debate. I also thank Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and Mr. Joseph Ballard, Senior Officer of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, for their briefings.

The mere existence of weapons of mass destruction constitutes a threat to humankind, and therefore to international peace and security. The possibility that such weapons may fall into the hands of non-State actors, especially terrorists, is of particular concern — all the more so today, as evidenced by the use of chemical weapons in Syria and Iraq. We are also concerned about the vulnerability of countries in the face of new threats resulting from the development of new information and communication technologies, which have been used by non-State actors to carry out cyberattacks specifically designed to target States' critical infrastructure.

As a member of the Security Council, Brazil actively participated in the discussions that led to the adoption of resolution 1540 (2004), and we have remained firmly committed to its implementation — as demonstrated by the national matrix prepared by the Group of Experts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and approved by the Committee.

Our Constitution prohibits any nuclear activity for non-peaceful purposes on Brazilian territory. Brazil is a party to all of the major treaties and conventions in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. At the same time, Brazil clearly promotes the peaceful uses of sensitive and dual-use goods and products, especially in activities related to industry, research and development.

Brazil has followed with interest the comprehensive review of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), concluded last December, and participated in the open consultations convened in June 2016 by the Chairman of the 1540 Committee. As the report on compliance with resolution 1540 (2004) acknowledges, the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) is a long-term task that requires continued efforts at the national, regional and international levels. We are pleased that resolution 2325 (2016) also assigns a key role to international cooperation and assistance for the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

We recognize the important work carried out by the 1540 Committee and its Group of Experts, in particular in trying to match offers of and requests for cooperation. In order to address some of the shortcomings of that process, countries in a position to do so should assist countries to formulate requests for assistance. Brazil has participated in cooperation and assistance initiatives that contribute to the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), especially in the drafting of national legislation on chemical and biological weapons and related materials.

Despite the importance of resolution 1540 (2004), the focusing of international efforts exclusively on the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass

destruction is insufficient. Disarmament measures are a fundamental component of any reasonable strategy to prevent such weapons from falling into the hands of non-State actors.

Over the past 50 years, the international community has successfully adopted legally binding multilateral instruments banning biological and chemical weapons. Given the destruction and unimaginable suffering that nuclear weapons are capable of inflicting, the lack of similar instruments for such weapons is unacceptable and constitutes a flagrant violation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

As we meet in the Council, the United Nations — in a debate open to all States, international organizations and civil society under a mandate pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/258 — is taking a decisive step to fill that vacuum through the negotiation of a nuclear-weapon-ban treaty. We are pleased with the constructive nature of today's debate, and we are optimistic that by 7 July we will reach a treaty to ban nuclear weapons. Such a treaty would represent an important contribution towards their total elimination, since, as evidenced by the example of chemical weapons and anti-personnel mines, prohibition is the first step towards elimination.

The international community has often been confronted with the reasoning that security and stability concerns hamper the goal of nuclear disarmament. That is a false dichotomy. Relying on nuclear deterrence doctrines and strategies undermines the medium- and long-term security of all States. The risk that non-State actors may wish to acquire nuclear weapons is just one of many examples of such threats to international security.

As former Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon has repeatedly said, "There are no right hands for wrong weapons." We hope that, after years of stagnation, the international community will finally make concrete progress towards the goal of a world free from all weapons of mass destruction.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list. Given the lateness of the hour, I intend, with the consent of the members of the Security Council, to suspend this meeing until 2 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.05 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7985 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

7985th meeting

Wednesday, 28 June 2017, 2 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Llorentty Soliz	(Bolivia (Plurinational State of))
Members:	China	Mr. Xiao Yuxin
	Egypt	Mr. Mahfouz
	Ethiopia	Mr Negash
	France	Mrs. Jarrot
	Italy	Mr. Romussi
	Japan	Mr. Kaneko
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Kuatbekov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lukshin
	Senegal	Mr. Sene
	Sweden	Ms. Coyet
	Ukraine	Mr. Leschenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Dixon
	United States of America	Mr. Lee
	Uruguay	Ms. García Moyano

Agenda

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

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The meeting resumed at 2.10 p.m.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Malaysia to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Emmanuel Roux, Special Representative of INTERPOL to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Security Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I now give the floor to the representative of Turkey.

Mrs. Yalçın (Turkey): Turkey aligns itself with the statements made on behalf of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004) and on behalf of the European Union. I will make the following statement in my national capacity.

Let me begin by thanking you, Sir, for organizing today's open debate as President of the Council and Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). Last year, the Committee completed the comprehensive review of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) (see S/2016/1038). During that process, Turkey worked closely with the Committee and its Group of Experts. Turkey's updated national matrix, which is on the Committee's website, clearly shows our meticulous implementation of the resolution.

The report on the comprehensive review and the subsequent adoption of resolution 2325 (2016) — co-sponsored by Turkey — in December 2016, has given impetus to the implementation of that instrument, which plays an important role in the efforts against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In that regard, we wish to thank Spain for its leadership as the previous Chair of the Committee, as well as the founder of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004).

Resolution 1540 (2004) established a central non-proliferation mechanism at the nexus of the risks posed by weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. The global threat of terrorism and transnational organized crime and our nations' growing reliance on international free trade represent some of the conflicting dynamics in that equation. In that regard, I would like to reiterate Turkey's strong commitment to the full implementation of the resolution and its readiness to continue to cooperate with the Committee.

Turkey has the relevant toolbox needed to fully implement its obligations under the provisions of the resolution, namely, all-encompassing national legislation and comprehensive international legal instruments on non-proliferation and counter-terrorism. The present proliferation concerns, coupled with large-scale global commerce, financial transactions and cyberrisks, place unprecedented responsibilities on Member States. In all parts of the world, transit trade and trans-shipments are usually the most vulnerable links in the chain of export control in terms of diversion. Reinforcing transit inspections will continue to remain high among Turkey's priorities with a view to strengthening export controls. However, it would be unfair to impose the burden of such controls on transit countries alone. Here, genuinely fair burden- and responsibility-sharing by source countries is needed.

As a country that has never pursued a weapons-of-mass-destruction programme, Turkey firmly opposes the development, production, stockpiling and use of such weapons by States and non-State actors. In that regard, the repeated use of chemical weapons in Syria cannot be considered in isolation, as it is fully consistent with the regime's chemical -weapons programmes. And the gaps, discrepancies and inconsistencies in its declarations to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) are a testimony to the regime's intentions.

The OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism established that culpability for the use of chemical weapons against civilians lies with the Syrian regime's armed forces and Da'esh. The use of toxic chemicals, the most recent example of which was the Khan Shaykhun attack on 4 April this year, is a brutal reminder to the international community that, unless the perpetrators of such attacks are held accountable for their crimes, the attacks will continue unabated. In that regard, we call upon the Security Council to take measures in accordance with its relevant resolutions.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Belgium.

Mr. Buffin (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Belgium shares the views expressed in the statements made on behalf of the European Union and on behalf of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004). Belgium would also like to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

First, let me thank the Bolivian presidency of the Security Council and Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) for convening today's debate.

As mentioned in my country's statement to the Council in December 2016 on this very topic (see S/PV.7758), the risk of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors is no longer a working hypothesis but rather a reality in various countries and regions. The allure and accessibility of certain weapons of mass destruction and of related chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear technologies and resources have increased among non-State actors in their quest for the means to carry out large-scale and indiscriminate attacks. It is therefore essential to continue to work towards the most effective implementation of existing provisions and instruments used to combat the proliferation of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear resources. The comprehensive review of resolution 1540 (2004) (see S/2016/1038), carried out in 2016 under the Spanish chairmanship of the 1540 Committee, is an excellent starting point. Everyone's vigilance and the proper collaboration and transparency between States are necessary.

With regard to chemical weapons, Belgium, which is preparing to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the first large-scale use of mustard gas in the Ypres region in 1917 during World War I, strongly supports the work carried out by the OPCW. The multilateral approach to the control of chemical substances must be preserved, as it has demonstrated throughout the OPCW's 20-year lifespan that it is able to considerably reduce exposure to chemical weapons. Belgium supports the work of the OPCW and regularly reviews its own chemical facilities. The use of chemical weapons cannot go unpunished, whether carried out by States or by non-State groups. In that regard, it is essential that the Fact-finding Mission and the United Nations-OPCW Joint Investigative Mechanism be able to continue their work without external interference so as to shed light on all of the chemical incidents that have occurred in Syria and determine who was responsible. We firmly believe that the Security Council should be unanimous in its condemnation of each chemical-weapons attack in Syria, both by the so-called Islamic State and by the Syrian regime.

As regards the fight against nuclear proliferation, Belgium has taken measures to secure existing sensitive materials and to reduce their quantities, often thanks to the support of new technologies. It is also acting to raise awareness among industry professionals. Our experts are also heavily involved in research that is geared towards the development of nuclear fuel that has a lower risk of proliferation than traditional fuel. Belgium remains vigilant in its control of medical and industrial radioactive sources and works to reduce the risk of proliferation around the world, particularly through its support for scientific research.

Despite the difficulties involved in implementing the Biological Weapons Convention, progress is possible in combating the proliferation of biological resources. The peer-review approach, to which Belgium contributed through the Benelux countries' peer review in 2015, has proved useful both in strengthening mutual trust in implementing the Convention and in building the capacity of the various States and experts participating in such reviews. Belgium takes this opportunity to pay tribute to Morocco, which successfully organized a peer review in May this year, with financial support from the European Union. We should also note the development of industrial standards in the biotechnology sector, as well as codes of conduct — developments that can strengthen that sector against the unwanted proliferation of biological resources.

Belgium believes that the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction into the hands of non-State actors can be effective only if it combines various approaches and includes a higher number of actors. Where multilateral initiatives exist and have proved to be effective, they must be strongly supported, and we must continue to adapt them to future challenges, in particular technological challenges. However, such multilateral and State-centred initiatives are not sufficient. Regional approaches, both formal and informal, can also play a fundamental role in the fight against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear proliferation. Approaches such as those supported by Council Decision 2017/809 of the Council of the European Union in support of resolution 1540 (2004) can indeed help to strengthen cooperation, build trust and transparency, foster the strengthening of expertise and disseminate best practices.

In conclusion, Belgium would like to stress that the role of economics in the implementation of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear safety and security norms is key to non-proliferation. State regulation and voluntary standards and certification by commercial entities can be mutually strengthening. However, given the amount of uncontrolled material at risk of proliferation and the limited amount of available public resources, we should favour an approach that involves all sectors of society in combating proliferation.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Laassel (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): My delegation welcomes the initiative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, as President of the Security Council, in organizing this open debate and expresses its appreciation for the leadership of that delegation as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

My delegation aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by Spain on behalf of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004).

Addressing today's theme on ways to prevent the catastrophic humanitarian, political, economic and environmental consequences of the use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons by non-State actors, in particular terrorists, is not an easy task. It involves both topical and complex issues, in particular the nexus of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, which generates its particular relevance.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction poses a threat to international peace and security. But the dramatic proliferation of terrorist actors and their expanding activities represent an even greater threat. Unfortunately, we are helplessly witnessing an endless spiral of terrorist attacks striking everywhere and in various forms. Those attacks increasingly demonstrate that terrorists are not holding back and are ready to spread terror by any means, including by using weapons of mass destruction, so as to generate the maximum number of victims and create chaos.

Terrorist groups are assisted in the execution of their macabre plans by the rapid development of new information technologies and various industrial advances that enable them to recruit from a distance, train remotely and even carry out remote attacks. If terrorists are determined to carry out their macabre plans, we must also be determined to preserve peace, to save lives, to fight against the terrorists and to prevent their access to new information and technologies. We must prevent them from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and from developing, trafficking or using them.

The United Nations has addressed the challenges of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in several ways, including through the process initiated by the Security Council in resolution 1540 (2004), adopted unanimously on 28 April 2004. Located at the intersection of the fight against proliferation and the fight against terrorism, resolution 1540 (2004) complements the international non-proliferation and counter-terrorism measures adopted by States in addressing the specific threats posed by non-State actors.

Resolution 1540 (2004) is original in that it is the first international law provision to take into account the collusion between the two main threats to world peace and security, namely, weapons of mass destruction and non-State actors. However, its originality concerns not only its content, but also its goal, ambition, strength and scope. Unlike other multilateral disarmament instruments, resolution 1540 (2004) was adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations and is, therefore, binding on all States Members of the United Nations. It must be acknowledged that since its adoption, Governments around the world have endeavoured to implement its main provisions by adopting many laws and implementing a wide range of appropriate measures.

In addition, several States have provided additional information on a voluntary basis or at the request of the 1540 Committee. Furthermore, a matrix common to all States to facilitate the collection of information relevant to assessing the implementation of the resolution has also helped to maintain a link with States.

Nevertheless, the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) remains a major challenge for many States, especially in Africa, owing to the precise nature of its requirements and the complex measures needed to address them. However, it is true that the 1540 Committee is making commendable efforts through the assistance mechanism to effectively assist States, which are, in most cases, not fully aware of their shortcomings and have difficulty identifying their needs in implementing the resolution.

The 1540 Committee also encourages States to report on legal systems and authorities, as well as civil and criminal measures adopted to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

However, there is little information for the assessment of the true effectiveness of the official measures. The submission of a report does not guarantee the correct implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), as some reports are more a statement of intent than a detailed account of genuine State action. Consequently, accurate accounting of the number of national reports submitted is not a reliable criterion for assessing the effective implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by States and the outcomes of their engagement. Hence the need for further efforts to improve the evaluation of State action in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

The 1540 Committee would, therefore, benefit from a greater focus on assisting States in identifying their shortcomings, without relying on the necessary but insufficient counting of the number of legal norms adopted, by analysing in depth the extent to which the standards were applied and their real impact on the sensitive areas identified in the resolution, such as the storage, transport and export of weapons of mass destruction and related materials, and their means of delivery.

Convinced that coordination through the exchange of information, especially at the subregional level, is dictated by the importance of proximity and shared borders in the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their use by non-State actors, the Kingdom of Morocco will organize an information workshop in November aimed at African national contact points, in the framework of seeking effective universal application of the provisions of the resolution.

The meeting will facilitate confidence-building among African States, thereby facilitating possible partnerships in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). It will also provide an opportunity to take stock of the regional situation, including the status of threats and persistent gaps in the mechanisms available to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction,particularly to non-State groups. The development of contacts and a deeper knowledge of the situation as a result of regional conferences are far from negligible.

I cannot conclude without reiterating that the international community must accelerate efforts to achieve the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction as the ultimate guarantee against their use and acquisition by non-State actors. In that context, Morocco will continue to fulfil its obligations under resolution 1540 (2004) and pursue fruitful cooperation with the 1540 Committee.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of South Africa.

Mr. Zaayman (South Africa): South Africa welcomes the convening of this open debate. Since the dawn of our democracy in 1994, South Africa has been steadfast in its commitment to multilateralism in addressing the peace and security challenges facing the global community, including the horizontal and vertical proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery. South Africa reaffirms that no cause could ever justify the use or threat of use of weapons of mass destruction anywhere, by anyone or under any circumstances.

Nuclear weapons remain the most indiscriminate and inhumane weapons ever to have been developed. Together with the vast majority of the international community, we believe that all efforts should consequently be made to ensure that those weapons are never used again, under any circumstances. The pursuit of nuclear disarmament is, therefore, not only a legal obligation, but also a moral and ethical imperative.

It is in that context that my delegation welcomes the convening of the United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. My delegation would like to stress that the instrument being negotiated is not a proverbial silver bullet that can cure all ills. Its main purpose is to encourage progress towards the total elimination of all nuclear weapons by stigmatizing and delegitimizing such weapons on a global scale.

We share the concern of the international community about the threat posed by non-State actors acquiring weapons of mass destruction and in this regard remain committed to the strengthening of transfer controls as called for in resolution 1540 (2004). We recognize the need for international assistance and cooperation, especially for States that may not have the requisite resources to give effect to their obligations. In our view, accomplishing the full implementation of resolution

1540 (2004) requires continuous and sustained efforts at the national, regional and international levels.

At the national level, South Africa has over the years strengthened its implementation capacity through comprehensive national legislation focusing on WMDs and their means of delivery. Our domestic legislation is subject to continuous review, taking into account new technological developments and experiences in national implementation.

While dealing with the aforementioned challenges, it is imperative that unwarranted restrictions not be imposed on the inalienable right of Member States, particularly developing countries, to use any related materials, equipment and technologies for peaceful purposes. In this regard, the opportunities provided by nuclear technologies in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in areas such as food security, public-health technologies and clean energy, cannot be overlooked.

Furthermore, the exchange of scientific information, equipment and materials for peaceful purposes is greatly needed in Africa to deal with the spread of infectious diseases, which could derail socioeconomic growth and development if not adequately addressed.

South Africa's experience with the implementation of control regimes has demonstrated that the challenges of WMDs and their delivery systems can be addressed by, first, strengthening national legislation and implementation capacities; secondly, accelerating the provision of capacity-building and technical expertise, especially to developing countries, including in Africa; thirdly, strengthening international cooperation with other related international organizations; fourthly, ensuring adequate and predictable funding for the relevant international organizations and implementation support structures so as to enable them to implement their mandates; fifthly, strengthening cooperation between regional organizations and the relevant multilateral organizations; and, sixthly and finally, enhancing cooperation with civil society and the private sector.

In conclusion, the threat of WMD proliferation can be dealt with effectively only through increased international cooperation and assistance as well as the strengthening of the relevant multilateral instruments and institutions. What is required is a faithful and balanced implementation of the various international legally binding instruments.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Austria.

Mr. Charwath (Austria): Let me thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this very timely open debate.

Austria, of course, fully aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the observer of the European Union. Let me therefore offer just a few additional remarks from my national perspective. I should like to talk about three issues.

First, in recent years, two of the most significant international security challenges of our time — terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) — have increasingly come to overlap and thereby compound each other. Recent instances of the use of chemical weapons not only by the Syrian regime but also by the Islamic State have increased public attention to this danger. In the current situation, resolution 1540 (2004) is becoming ever more relevant, and, with last year's resolution 2325 (2016), we now have a new instrument to further improve the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) in the face of these growing threats.

Secondly, Austria is firmly committed to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. My country is party to all relevant international treaties, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention.

Austria considers export controls as an important tool to prevent proliferation and therefore actively participates in the Zangger Committee, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Australia Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime.

Importantly, Austria has in place legislation aimed at implementing effectively, at the national level, its international non-proliferation commitments, such as the relevant articles of the Austrian penal code and of our Foreign Trade Act. Let me also mention that Austria serves as the Executive Secretariat of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. We also participate in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

But, thirdly, the most horrific scenario of all, namely, the acquisition of nuclear material or, even worse, a nuclear weapon by terrorists can, unfortunately, not be dismissed as unrealistic today. It is clear that there are

actors with a firm intention to achieve exactly that, and there is evidence that some are working systematically to overcome the remaining obstacles. The humanitarian and other consequences of a nuclear terrorist attack would be catastrophic.

While we have to redouble our efforts within the existing nuclear non-proliferation regimes to prevent such an occurrence, we also have to reinforce these regimes. One of the major obstacles, of course, is the continued existence of nuclear weapons as such. The greater their number and the greater the number of possessor States, the more difficult it is to secure them against theft, hacking or other forms of unauthorized access by non-State actors.

Equally importantly, so long as a number of States possess such weapons, others will be tempted to develop or to get hold of them as well. And the greater the number of States that possess nuclear weapons and related material, the more opportunities there will be for non-State actors to get their hands on them.

Inversely, the smaller the overall number of nuclear weapons in the world and of States possessing them, the smaller the risk that non-State actors will achieve their nefarious objectives. That is why real progress on nuclear disarmament is crucial, not least in the context of our discussion here.

The convention on the prohibition of nuclear weapons that is currently under negotiation at the United Nations — downstairs in this very Building — is aimed at facilitating such progress. Let me emphasize that this initiative is fully in line with the existing non-proliferation regime, with the NPT at its centre, and that its aim is to strengthen, not weaken, the regime. Moreover, the initiative has already delivered some other positive results, as the multilateral disarmament machinery, both here in New Nork and in Geneva, seems to have geared up recently compared with recent years.

In our view, we must work in both directions to ensure greater security for all, strengthening the existing non-proliferation and control regimes and seeking the elimination of nuclear weapons worldwide.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Guatemala.

Mr. Skinner-Klée (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me at the outset to congratulate the delegation of the Plurinational State of Bolivia on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and on its outstanding leadership at the helm of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), of which you, Sir, are the Chair. We also welcome the presence of and the timely presentations by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, and the representative of the Office of Strategy and Policy of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Mr. Joseph Ballard. We also appreciate the concept note circulated by your delegation, Mr. President, which serves as our guide for today's debate.

I also associate myself with the statements to be made by the delegation of Spain as Chair of the Group of Friends of the 1540 Committee and the delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as Chair of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

There can be no doubt that terrorism is one of the main challenges facing the world today. Likewise, the use of weapons of mass destruction, especially by non-State actors, and the threat that their proliferation poses to international peace and security are a priority issue for us all.

In recent years, the face and the methods of terrorism have changed. Furthermore, advances in the area of science, technology and international trade, which in many ways have improved our daily lives, have brought with them a series of new threats to security through their potential use as instruments by radical groups and individuals who seek to wreak havoc on civilization. Sadly, many recent examples show that the threat of terrorism knows no borders and that no country or region is immune to attack. Hence it is imperative that all Member States comply with our obligation to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems and related materials so as to prevent their acquisition by non-State actors, and ensure that States have the resources and the capacity necessary to do so.

For my delegation, resolution 1540 (2004) has pride of place in the international non-proliferation regime. We would like to emphasize in particular the preventive and cooperative nature of that important resolution. The aim since its adoption has been the establishment of an instrument to strengthen the approach to non-proliferation commitments without directly affecting Member States' compliance with their obligations with respect to the other pillars

of disarmament, including the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

We fully agree with the concept note prepared for today's debate, which stresses the importance of resolution 1540 (2004) as a platform for cooperation, but which also warns that it would be counterproductive for that spirit of cooperation to be turned into a coercive or punitive mechanism.

We also recognize the need to strengthen the international non-proliferation framework in general, and resolution 1540 (2004) in particular, as well as the need to adapt them to the reality of the threat that they seek to prevent. We believe that the recent comprehensive review process of resolution 1540 (2004). The adoption of resolution 2325 (2016) achieved that delicate balance, taking into account the evolving nature of the risk of proliferation, the technological advances and new obligations to address the threat, while recognizing the importance of providing States with the resources and capacity necessary to achieve the full implementation of the resolution.

We also noted that the review process recognized the important role of the Expert Group Meeting on the Development of a Training Module on the International Legal Framework against Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Terrorism and the importance of regional organizations in the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). Universal, comprehensive and balanced implementation of the resolution is possible only if all Member States play a central role, and have the resources to do so. Regional organizations are ideal partners for that, having the knowledge of the specificities and realities of each of their member States, as well as of the region as a whole. We welcome the role played in our own region by the Organization of American States and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Guatemala is aware of the significance of this important resolution and is committed to complying with its obligations in this area. We have also made additional commitments by requesting technical assistance from the Committee so as to develop a national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), and also have several ongoing legislative processes under way. Following the initial visit to my country by several members of the Committee's Group of Experts to begin formulating the national action plan in Guatemala, efforts are continuing at the national level with various Government entities to work on the main elements of the Plan.

Finally, we recall that the only guarantee for preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and preventing them from falling into the hands of non-State actors is that they no longer exist. We therefore welcome the conference currently under way to negotiate a legally binding instrument banning nuclear weapons, leading to their total elimination. We are convinced that a ban on those deadly weapons will bring us closer to the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Falouh (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this important meeting on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). This meeting is of particular importance given the threat represented by the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction, their components and delivery systems by terrorist groups.

The worst violations of resolution 1540 (2004) today are the insistence of certain countries and certain intelligence services on supporting and training terrorist groups, even going so far as to provide them with toxic chemical weapons that are then used against both the military and civilians. The representatives of those same countries are seeking to deviate today's meeting from its goals by raising topics that are not on the agenda, in order to impede our efforts and prevent the Security Council from holding a genuine, serious debate on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

In that regard, we would like to recall that it is those countries that opposed the draft resolution (S/2016/847) submitted by Russia and China aimed at impeding the acquisition of chemical weapons by terrorist groups in Syria and Iraq. It is those same countries that opposed the efforts and attempts to make the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction; they did that for the sole purpose of protecting Israel's chemical, biological and nuclear arsenal.

The Israeli representative made a statement that included a tangle of baseless accusations and lies. It is almost comical, even pitiful, that the members of the international community must sit in the Council

Chamber and listen to such allegations and lies coming from a representative of an occupying Power that continues to occupy Arab territories and support terrorists groups, in particular the Al-Nusra Front, in the area of separation. That country has a nuclear, biological and chemical weapons arsenal, with the consent and protection of Western countries that are permanent members of the Council.

The support that Israel provides to terrorist groups in Syria has been proved by the extensive evidence that we have provided to the Council. For those who are still doubtful, I encourage them to read the report published by *The Wall Street Journal* on 19 June 2017, which is punctuated by terrorist confessions.

My Government has for some time and in a consistent manner warned of the danger of terrorist groups acquiring weapons of mass destruction, in particular Da'esh, the Al-Nusra Front and Al-Qaida. To date, we have sent more than 108 letters to the Council, to the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, to the Joint Investigative Mechanism and to all of the relevant committees and bodies of the Security Council. Our letters include documented information implicating countries that have provided such chemical products as chlorine, mustard gas and sarin gas to terrorist groups to be used against civilians.

I would also like to say that Turkish intelligence service transferred sarin gas to terrorist groups in Syria after the product arrived from Libya in 2013. The regime of President Erdoğan facilitates the transfer of such substances to Da'esh, the Al-Nusra Front and other terrorist groups in Syria, and that is a flagrant violation of the provisions of resolution 1540 (2004).

My country is still waiting for the bodies and special mechanisms of the United Nations to react to that information and to treat it with the seriousness it deserves. We are also waiting for that information to be reflected in the reports on chemical weapons and their use by terrorist groups. This is no longer a matter of merely making a statement in international forums. Such chemical weapons are in the hands of terrorists and are being used in many regions of Syria, most recently in Khan Shaykhun. The attacks were premeditated and were driven by regional and international forces in order to tarnish the image of Syria and to justify attacks against the Syrian forces who are fighting terrorism.

The accusations and allegations that we have heard over the past two days from Western representatives, as well as from the persons representing those countries today, all of those declarations are part of the political blackmail war — the very low war — that now systematically accompanies every success of the Syrian army and its allies as they fight terrorism. Those lies are also being systematically presented in the negotiations among various Syrian parties, both in Astana and Geneva, in order to impede the efforts made by the Syrian Government to arrive at a political solution without outside interference.

We have a consistent position of principle. We condemn the use of chemical weapons and any and all weapons of mass destruction. Their use is a crime against humanity that is unacceptable, immoral and unjustifiable, regardless of the surrounding circumstances. On that basis, my country ratified the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, and we have implemented all of our commitments. My country ended its chemical-weapons programme in record time, which is unprecedented in the history of the Organization. That achievement was noted in the report of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Mission for the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons Programme of the Syrian Arab Republic and was brought to the attention of the Council in June 2014.

In conclusion, my country has always rejected all allegations by certain Western Administrations concerning the use of chemical and toxic weapons by the Syrian armed forces. In line with our commitments, we have fully cooperated within the framework of the investigation carried out by international bodies since 2014. We have provided all the needed information in order to facilitate the investigation and ensure that it is credible and impartial. However, some Members of this Organization will never tell the truth, for reasons that are well known to Council members.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Cho Tae-yul (Republic of Korea): I would like to begin by commending the Bolivian presidency of the Security Council and the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) for organizing this important debate. The fact that this is

the third open debate since August of last year on the issue of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) by non-State actors clearly demonstrates the urgency and gravity of the tnreat and challenges before us.

Indeed, the seemingly unthinkable scenario of terrorist organizations or other non-State actors gaining access to WMDs has become a reality, as illustrated by the identified uses of chemical weapons against civilians in Syria and Iraq. The assessment of the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) that the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, or Da'esh, may have the capacity to produce chemical weapons is more than worrisome. At the same time, there is simply no guarantee that nuclear and biological materials are safe from the hands of such malicious actors.

That is the reason that the Republic of Korea fully aligns itself with the joint statement to be delivered by the representative of Spain on behalf of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004). Given the fact that such non-State actors are taking advantage of transboundary networks enabled by rapid advances in science, technology and international commerce, I would like to make additional remarks in my national capacity, with a focus on the following three points for further consideration in our joint efforts to combat the proliferation od weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors.

First, with regard to building a multilayered prevention mechanism, our response to non-State actors must be as transboundary and tech-savvy as theirs is. In addition to export and border controls at the domestic level, mechanisms provided by the 1540 system provide a rallying point for our regional and global efforts to prevent the illicit acquisition of WMDs. On top of that, as the representative of the country currently holding the chairmanship of both the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime, I would like to stress the importance of active participation in initiatives taken by multilateral export-control regimes to add one more layer of sharing proliferation-related information, such as on updated dual-use items and recent techniques used by non-State actors.

Secondly, with regard to creating a cascade effect in awareness-raising, resolution 2325 (2016) calls for more regional conferences and 1540-points-of-contact training sessions. As terrorist groups' networks are becoming wider-spread, we should invest more in mobilizing public-and private-sector focal points so that they can reach wider constituents of our society. In that regard, last year, the Government of the Republic of Korea successfully hosted the first of the regional Wiesbaden conferences for industry outreach in the Pacific region. The Republic of Korea will continue to support 1540-points-of-contact training sessions in various regions through its contribution to the Trust Fund for Global and Regional Disarmament Activities.

Finally, national capacities should be scaled up through tailor-made matchmaking. Two years of the chairmanship of the 1540 Committee, from 2013 to 2014, taught Seoul that matching offers and requests for assistance is most challenging, but we also learned that through such matching we can close gaps in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) against the wishes of ill-disposed non-State actors.

In conclusion, it would be remiss of me not to mention the threat posed to the global non-proliferation regime by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's continued pursuit of WMD and missile capabilities. Considering that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is one of the weakest links in our joint endeavours to prevent the proliferation of nuclear and chemical materials and their means of delivery to non-State actors, I would like to underscore the importance of the full and effective implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 2325 (2016), in tandem with the relevant Security Council sanctions resolutions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, by the international community as a whole.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Viet Nam.

Mrs. Nguyen Phuong Nga (Viet Nam): I would like to express my appreciation to the Bolivian presidency and chairmanship of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) for convening this open debate on global efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) by non-State actors. I also thank the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and the Senior Officer from the Office of Strategy and Policy of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons for their informative briefings.

Viet Nam aligns itself with the statement to be delivered later by the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The extraordinary and rapid advances in science and technology create enormous benefits for humankind, but they also bring about the risk of misuse, enabling non-State actors to take advantage of such advances to gain access to WMDs and making it harder for States to put in place adequate controls over proliferation activities. The risk of non-State actors acquiring, developing and using WMDs and their means of delivery poses a grave threat to global peace and security and is even more alarming in cases when terrorists and their supporters have shown their intent and capability to develop and use WMDs. Toxic chemicals have been reportedly used as weapons in Syria and Iraq by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, causing serious casualties and devastating socioeconomic consequences for civilians and their livelihoods.

The United Nations has been playing an active role in tackling the threat of the proliferation of WMDs by non-State actors. It has promoted multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, raised public awareness and assisted Member States in building and strengthening their capacities to prevent non-State actors from acquiring and using such lethal weapons. In that regard, my delegation wishes to commend the 1540 Committee for its findings and conclusions in the comprehensive review report (see S/2016/1038), as well as the Security Council for adopting resolution 2325 (2016), which has mapped out a global agenda for the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). We acknowledge the positive contributions made by Member States to the success of the open-ended working group during the special sessions of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We also welcome the increased cooperation and coordination at the national, regional and international levels in global non-proliferation activities involving the United Nations and other stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, with, as appropriate, their States' consent.

Viet Nam is strongly committed to WMD disarmament and non-proliferation efforts and actively advocates for the peaceful use of related technologies. Viet Nam is a party to, and complies fully with, its obligations under all key WMD disarmament and non-proliferation treaties, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention, as well as the Safeguards Agreement of the International Atomic Energy Agency and its Additional Protocol. Viet Nam fully implements the relevant Security Council resolutions and actively participates in related initiatives, such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the Proliferation Security Initiative. At the national level, we have adopted and enforced appropriate legislation and have established domestic controls to impede non-State actors from undertaking, assisting or financing such proliferation activities.

Viet Nam believes that addressing WMD proliferation must be coupled with substantive progress on WMD disarmament. We welcome the ongoing United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading to their total elimination. We also believe that our efforts towards the establishment and promotion of nuclear-weapons-free zones also contribute to the existing global non-proliferation regime. At the same time, non-proliferation efforts should not hinder the legitimate rights of States to acquire, produce and use chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear-related materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes. It is also important to avoid placing an undue burden on States with regard to such efforts. Rather, States, especially developing countries, should develop their own effective strategies for countering new types of crime.

In conclusion, I want to say that we believe that it is high time for us to redouble our efforts, along with united political will and strong determination, to take collective action against the grave security challenge posed by WMD proliferation. In order to fully implement the global non-proliferation agenda, we need the active participation and large-scale cooperation both within and among States.

You can rest assured, Mr. President, of Viet Nam's commitment to striving for a world free of all weapons of mass destruction.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh.

Mr. Bin Momen (Bangladesh): I thank you, Mr. President, for your presence throughout our deliberations today. Bangladesh also thanks the presidency of the Plurinational State of Bolivia for organizing this high-level open debate. We thank the briefers for sharing their insights.

We recall the implementation of the comprehensive review of resolution 1540 (2004) under the leadership of the delegation of Spain last year. We reiterate our conviction that the action-oriented and balanced approach of resolution 2325 (2016) will help Member States further consolidate their respective 1540-compliance regimes.

The growing use of illicit financing, new technologies and the dark web by non-State actors, including terrorists, continues to pose new challenges to Member States. Those trends require us to devise more innovative, well-coordinated and fool-proof national mechanisms, especially for securing the production, use, storage and transport of materials related to chemical and biological weapons. It also remains of paramount importance to ensure cross-border controls against the illicit transfer of arms, ammunition, weapons of mass destruction and their means of production and delivery. In order to build on the progress in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and address the emerging gaps, we would reiterate the following four points.

First, the concept note for this debate aptly recognizes that the task of implementing resolution 1540 (2004) is a long-term undertaking. It would therefore be crucial to support its implementation in a coordinated and consistent, yet context-specific manner. The regular sharing of best practices, including through the national points of contact network, would be particularly useful. In that regard, we recall Bangladesh's participation in the training course for points of contact held in Qingdao, China, in September 2015, and we look forward to participating in the upcoming one in August this year.

Secondly, the wide divergences in implementation among Member States will continue to persist unless meaningful financial and technical assistance is provided to overcome the structural constraints faced by many States. We would expect Member States and the relevant entities in a position to do so to redouble their efforts to provide concrete, needs-based assistance to interested States upon their request. The 1540 Committee's Group of Experts can continue to help Member States to better identify and articulate their needs and match them with a relevant offer of support and expertise by States and other stakeholders.

Thirdly, resolution 2325 (2016) makes a strong case for further enhancing the 1540 Committee's cooperation and interface with the relevant international, regional and subregional entities. We reaffirm the need to avoid duplication and to facilitate assistance and the sharing of expertise on a regional basis.

Fourthly, we take note of the rapid advances in science and technology that are susceptible to abuse or risks of proliferation by non-State actors, including terrorists. We call upon the 1540 Committee to help enhance our information and knowledge base about the evolving risks, especially those requiring our pre-emptive action.

The threat of WMDs falling into the hands of unauthorized non-State actors has rightly been identified as a looming catastrophe. As a responsible member of the international community, Bangladesh remains committed to further strengthening its efforts to help prevent any such situation and its grave consequences. We continue to work to make our voluntary reports to the 1540 Committee more informative and comprehensive.

In conclusion, we affirm that we associate ourselves with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Botswana.

Mr. Ntwaagae (Botswana): At the outset, allow me, Mr. President, to join other delegations in commending your delegation most sincerely on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for the month of June. I also wish to commend you for convening this important open debate focused on the global effort to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors.

Botswana aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Botswana also welcomes this open debate, which seeks to consider practical measures to implement resolution 1540 (2004), and applauds your country, Sir, for drawing global attention to the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors. The rise of terrorism and insurgent groups increases the risk of non-State actors acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

The advent of international terrorism has had adverse effects on our efforts to establish and sustain a tranquil and peaceful international order. Moreover, in the recent past, terrorist groups have employed weapons

of mass destruction against innocent and unarmed civilian populations. Ensuring that such actors do not have access to those devastating weapons should be a lesson and a challenge for us all.

Botswana fully supports resolution 1540 (2004), which urges all States to refrain from providing any form of support to non-State actors seeking to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery, in particular for terrorist purposes.

Weapons of mass destruction are a serious threat to global peace and security, and their use has devastating consequences for humankind and all forms of life on our planet. In that regard, it is imperative that the Security Council, Member States and international organizations spare no effort in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors. In that regard, Botswana reaffirms its commitment to international instruments that ban weapons of mass destruction, such as the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention.

Botswana also fully supports the ongoing United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading to their total elimination Should that effort come to fruition, it would be an enormous step towards a nuclear-free world, for which we all yearn.

Before I conclude, let me highlight some of the measures that Botswana has adopted to support the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). To strengthen national capacities to deal with emerging global security challenges, Botswana, among other things, adopted a counter-terrorism act, a chemical-weapon prohibition act and a proceeds-and-instruments of crime act. Botswana also continues to train agencies, such as the financial intelligence agency, and other safety and security entities to effectively deal with the crimes of terrorism, terrorist financing, money laundering and the monitoring and tracking of the movement of chemicals in the country that have the potential to contribute to the proliferation of chemical weapons.

There are a number of challenges and opportunities available to us in order to effectively deal with this matter. Botswana firmly believes that deepening international cooperation and strengthening existing mechanisms should form the basis of our efforts to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. We are gravely concerned that, while there is general consensus on the escalation of international terrorism, the difficulty in agreeing on a common definition of terrorism will continue to undermine our efforts to fight that global scourge.

Also problematic is the phenomenon of dual-use and the use for peaceful means. The inherent right of sovereign States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, for instance, must be respected. Anything to the contrary undermines existing multilateral instruments, the Charter of the United Nations and all others efforts to prevent non-State actors from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm Botswana's unwavering commitment to support the international community by playing its part in ensuring that terror organizations do not have access to any weapons of mass destruction. We need sustainable peace and security in order for the human spirit to thrive and develop.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I am pleased to see you, Ambassador Sacha Llorentty Soliz, a son of Bolivia — our liberator's favourite country — presiding over the Security Council this month. You have done an outstanding job and we wish to congratulate you.

It is an honour for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

First of all, allow me to convey, on behalf of the member States of the Movement, our best wishes to the delegation of the Plurinational State of Bolivia for a successful month in conducting the work of the Council, as well as our appreciation for its efforts in the drafting of the concept note for this meeting, which serves as a basis for guiding our discussions today.

We also take this opportunity to acknowledge the dedication with which the delegation of Uruguay led the work of this organ during the month of May.

During the seventeenth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in September 2016 on Margarita Island, Venezuela, the Heads of State and Government reiterated their ongoing concern about the difficult and complex situation in the area of disarmament and international security, and called for the redoubling of

efforts in order to break the current stalemate in the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects. On that occasion, the Heads of State and Government also reaffirmed the Movement's principled positions on nuclear disarmament, which remains its top priority, and on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects, while emphasizing the importance of ensuring that efforts towards nuclear non-proliferation are concurrent to efforts towards nuclear disarmament. They also expressed concern about the threat posed to humankind by the existence of nuclear weapons and their possible use or threat of use.

Similarly, in relation to chemical weapons, the countries of the Movement that are States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) note with satisfaction its effective operation as the only comprehensive multilateral treaty banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, establishing a system of verification and promoting the use of chemicals for peaceful purposes. With regard to future priorities, the countries of the Movement that are States parties to the CWC consider that the primary objective should remain the complete elimination of all categories of chemical weapons, with the firm conviction that all pillars of the Convention will be treated in a balanced way.

Similarly, with respect to biological weapons, the countries of the Movement that are States parties to the Biological Weapons Convention are of the view that the Convention represents an important component of the international legal architecture related to weapons of mass destruction, but recognize that the lack of a verification system continues to undermine the effectiveness of the Convention, and urge parties that reject the resumption of multilateral negotiations on a legally binding protocol to reconsider their policy.

In reaffirming the absolute validity of multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, the Non-Aligned Movement reiterates its determination to promote multilateralism as a fundamental principle of disarmament and non-proliferation negotiations.

On the other hand, the member States of the Movement stress that the most effective way to prevent the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists is the total elimination of such weapons, while emphasizing the need to urgently make progress in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation in order to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security and to boost global counter-terrorism efforts. That issue is of particular concern to us, given the fact that terrorist groups have used chemical weapons in the past, including in countries that are part of the Movement.

In that regard, we call on all Member States to support international efforts to prevent the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery by terrorists, and urge Member States to adopt and strengthen national measures, as appropriate, so as to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems and materials and technologies related to their production.

The member States of the Movement encourage cooperation between the international community and the relevant international and regional organizations to strengthen national capacities, in line with General Assembly resolution 70/36, with a view to strengthening the national capacities of States and curbing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including to non-State actors and terrorist groups — in keeping with the relevant obligations in the framework of the international legal architecture related to weapons of mass destruction.

Also, in noting the adoption of Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004), 1673 (2006), 1810 (2008) and 1977 (2011), we stress the need to ensure that no action by the Security Council undermines the Charter of the United Nations and the existing multilateral treaties on weapons of mass destruction and the international organizations established in that regard, as well as the role of the General Assembly. We also caution against the recurring practice of the Security Council to use its authority to define legislative requirements for Member States to implement the decisions of this organ. In that regard, we want to emphasize the importance of ensuring that the issue of non-State actors' acquisition of weapons of mass destruction is addressed in an inclusive manner by the General Assembly so that the views of all Member States are taken into account.

The Movement also welcomes the successful conclusion of the third session of the Open-ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament. We would like to stress the importance of convening such a special session, which would provide us with an opportunity to

consider the most critical aspects of the disarmament process from a perspective that is more in line with the current international situation, and to mobilize the international community and public opinion in support of eliminating nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and controlling and reducing the availability of conventional weapons.

In conclusion, in maintaining its commitment to banning the development of new types of weapons of mass destruction, the Non-Aligned Movement reiterates its adherence to the objectives and principles outlined in General Assembly resolution 69/27, entitled "Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons: report of the Conference on Disarmament".

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands.

Mr. Van Oosterom (Netherlands): I would like to thank you, Sir, for presiding over this afternoon's resumption of the meeting in person, which we greatly appreciate. We would also like to express our sincere thanks to Bolivia for convening today's important open debate on a crucial and urgent issue.

The Netherlands aligns itself with the statements delivered earlier by the observer of the European Union and by the representative of Spain, on behalf of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540, as well as with the points made by the representative of Italy in the context of our split term on the Security Council. In addition, the Kingdom of the Netherlands would like to make the following remarks.

Unfortunately, the use of chemical weapons by terrorists has become a dreadful reality. The Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS) has used chemical weapons in Syria and is trying to expand those capabilities. We firmly condemn the use of chemical weapons both by ISIS and by the Syrian Arab Republic. Those horrendous acts have reminded us of the importance of resolution 1540 (2004), and this open debate continues the work it requires. The comprehensive review carried out under Spain's presidency of the Council and adopted under resolution 2325 (2016) in December was an important step in that process. As I have said before, we are grateful for Spain's transparent and inclusive conduct of the review.

I would like to focus on three issues today — implementation, nuclear security and the threat of biological weapons. The first of these is the importance of ensuring the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). We have come a long way since the resolution was adopted, but reaching full worldwide implementation by 2021 will still require a tremendous effort from all of us — first and foremost from Member States, but also from international and regional organizations and industry. With so many actors, considerable coordination will be needed to ensure efficient and effective implementation and to prevent overlapping or competing efforts by different organizations. In that regard, the work that has been done by the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and its Panel of Experts is indispensable. And where implementation is concerned, we also have a great instrument at our disposal — our national action plans. They help Member States approach implementation comprehensively and can also improve the effectiveness and efficiency of international technical assistance. This is a truly forward-looking instrument that can help us put the emphasis on action rather than reporting. We therefore strongly encourage other Member States to use national action plans.

That brings me to my second point, nuclear security. Of course, we are all aware of the horrific effects that a terrorist attack using nuclear or radiological weapons would have. Nuclear security is key to addressing that threat. It is a prime example of how the implementation of resolution 1540 can count on solid international organizations, above all the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Its work is indispensable and deserves the international community's full support. We would like to stress the importance of close cooperation among the IAEA, Member States and the 1540 Committee in strengthening nuclear security worldwide.

My third point is about biological weapons. The possibility of a biological attack by non-State actors is real, and the need to address this threat is more pressing than ever. That is why we should make the most of the existing international framework for addressing the threat of biological weapons. Its implementation must be improved and its existing framework strengthened, especially given the rapid pace of technological development in the biological sciences. All States parties to the Biological Weapons Convention should pursue those ends in good faith, as well as working to universalize the Convention.

In conclusion, we need full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and better cooperation with the IAEA on nuclear security. We also need to strengthen the existing framework on biological weapons. The Netherlands will continue to be a partner to the Security Council in further work on this important topic.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Special Representative of INTERPOL to the United Nations.

Mr. Roux: I would like to thank you, Mr. President, in your capacity as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), for inviting INTERPOL to present its strategy for combating the global threats represented by chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) terrorism by non-State actors, as well as to discuss the policing capabilities we provide to our member States and the global community.

The use of CBRN materials by terrorist groups such as Da'esh and by criminals and other non-State actors has become one of the most significant challenges to global security today. In 2010, INTERPOL made a strategic decision to launch a comprehensive CBRN terrorism-prevention-and-response capability in support of its 190 member States. The INTERPOL methodology for countering CBRN threats specifically from non-State actors has four main pillars that respond to the needs of member States — intelligence and operational data services; capacity-building; investigative and operational support; and working in partnership. CBRN threats are also a key element in INTERPOL's counter-terrorism strategy, which was endorsed by its entire membership very recently, in November 2016.

First, through our intelligence and operational data services, we facilitate the secure exchange of information among member countries and identify criminals and criminal organizations through intelligence analysis, which represents the foundation of INTERPOL's work and mandate. INTERPOL collects and analyses information on CBRN incidents and conducts threat assessments, and shares intelligence and analysis regarding CBRN threats and incidents with INTERPOL's member countries and partner agencies through monthly and ad hoc reports. Specialized databases such as Geiger and Watchmaker provide operational and specialized support to member countries through the sharing of INTERPOL notices and warning messages on individuals involved in illegal CBRN activities by non-State actors.

The second pillar is capacity-building. Given the gravity of a potential CBRN terrorist attack and its consequences, prevention and countermeasures constitute an essential element in both national and international strategies. INTERPOL engages in efforts to increase the level of CBRN awareness in law-enforcement agencies, delivers training sessions designed to increase law-enforcement capabilities and provides prevention methodologies for use by member countries. Major INTERPOL CBRN capacity-building programmes include workshop training courses and tabletop exercises.

The third pillar is investigative and operational support. Strictly at the request of member States, INTERPOL can provide operational support to them in the form of incident response teams. In the event of a terrorist attack, staff with expertise in CBRN matters can be deployed to these teams. In addition, INTERPOL runs a number of initiatives, projects and operations that support the international law-enforcement community in tackling the illicit trafficking of CBRN materials.

Fourthly, and lastly, is working in partnership. Due to the complex nature of CBRN prevention and response, a multidisciplinary approach is essential. Action needs to be coordinated at the national Government level, while also ensuring close cooperation and information exchange among the various ministries, agencies and institutions involved. This inter-agency approach needs to be extended on an international level.

INTERPOL works in this global arena, connecting our worldwide network of member countries and maintaining close partnerships with other international agencies and initiatives that are specialized in the CBRN field, such as the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and others. I stand ready to provide additional information to any interested actor or Mission.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia.

Mr. Morales López (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I join the previous delegations that have congratulated you, Mr. President, on your work in the Security Council this month and on your leadership as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). We are grateful to Under-Secretary-General

Nakamitsu and Mr. Joseph Ballard of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for their briefings.

Following the concept note for today's debate, I will focus on sharing practical, concrete measures from my country's experience, with a view to facilitating and improving States' implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). For Colombia, national legislation is a key element in addressing the threat posed by the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors. However, efforts aimed at adopting national legal norms must be accompanied by efforts aimed at strengthening cooperation between States and institutions and addressing the issue from the perspective of prevention.

Beyond strengthening legal norms and the capacity to respond, Colombia has repeatedly suggested in different forums improving particular aspects, such as safety and chemical, nuclear and radiological protective measures in order to prevent the diversion of hazardous materials into the hands of non-State actors, while also ensuring their security and protection at all stages of their life cycle, from research, development and manufacturing to transport through the supply chain, storage and waste disposal. The strengthening of security measures and chemical, nuclear and radiological protection will prevent non-State actors from acquiring these types of materials.

The OPCW and the International Atomic Energy Agency, through their verification activities and safeguards systems, respectively, have played a leading role in monitoring the peaceful uses of chemistry and nuclear energy. These systems of control have guaranteed that all legally constituted actors within States comply with the established controls. Accordingly, these industries ensure adequate monitoring of hazardous materials when they are on their radar. However, the importance of strengthening the identification and tracking of end users, both within States and abroad, has been emphasized. Similarly, importance has been given to strengthening border controls to prevent illegal trafficking in hazardous materials, controls in ports and airports to prevent the diversion of such materials, and oversight on the import, export, transit, transhipment and re-export of chemical, radiological and nuclear products.

On the international scene today, the emergence of new threats and irregular wars have served to highlight the imperative need to ensure that weapons and their components, as well as the technology and processes for manufacturing them, are not likely to fall into the hands of non-State actors and terrorist groups. For this reason, strategic trade control has become an irreversible trend at the international level.

Customs is a crucial link for strategic trade control. Colombia therefore considers it essential to make strides in the implementation of modern standards stipulated by the World Customs Organization in order to meet the challenges required by both resolution 1540 (2004) and an increasingly interconnected and globalized world, thereby improving the foreign trade processes related to imports, transit, transhipment and exports. That is why my country is seeking to make progress in learning and awareness-raising in its institutions with respect to working on strategic trade issues, given their direct implications for the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

Proof of the foregoing is the country's recent participation in the first regional conference in Latin America of the Wiesbaden Industry Process, entitled "Private sector engagement in strategic trade controls for the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004)", which took place in Mexico City at the beginning of this month and where the need to strengthen ties between the public and private sector and to work jointly to fulfil our country's commitment to resolution 1540 (2004) and strategic trade control of strategic trade was made evident.

Finally, in order to make further progress in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), at the end of July, Chile and Colombia will carry out the first on-site peer-review visit to assess the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and share experiences, procedures and best practices at the national level. This exercise was made possible thanks to the support of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, the 1540 Committee Group of Experts and the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Djani (Indonesia): Following my Dutch colleague, let me also honour you, Mr. President, by saying in Spanish.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

"many thanks for your presidency and for convening today's important debate."

(*spoke in English*)

We also thank the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and the other briefers for their statements.

Indonesia associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

As a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention and the South-East Asia nuclear-weapon-free zone, and having ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, Indonesia welcomes today's focus on the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to non-State actors.

Although Indonesia fully supports resolutions 1540 (2004) and 2325 (2016), I will not list all the steps that my country has taken to safeguard against the WMD proliferation threat. Suffice it to say, we have instituted comprehensive measures to counter the development, acquisition, manufacture, possession, transportation, transfer or use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their delivery systems. Regionally, too, Indonesia participates actively in the various Association of Southeast Asian Nations forums on export controls and non-proliferation.

All States must fulfil their responsibilities to ensure that the WMD threat from non-State actors is dealt with effectively. It is therefore encouraging that the latest five-year comprehensive report (see S/2016/1038) by the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), presented last December observed that most States had undertaken enhanced measures on the prohibition of non-State-actor activities relating to nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery. It also acknowledged greater reporting by States. While the report also pointed out gaps, it rightly noted that the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) is a long-term task that requires continuous efforts at national, regional and international levels with intensified support.

International cooperation and assistance are critical when it comes to resolution 1540 (2004), especially when taking into account countries' varied economic and industrial abilities. Indonesia underlines the 1540 Committee's role in facilitating matchmaking and extending extra support, in particular to those countries that lack capacities in furnishing technical-assistance proposals. There needs to be a proper response to the decrease in the number of requests for assistance submitted to the 1540 Committee during the five-year period ending in 2016 as compared to the five-year period ending in 2011. Greater support from the Committee and its Group of Experts, including close cooperation with national 1540 points of contact, along with adequate support from other relevant parts of the United Nations system and the international community, will be extremely important.

It also goes without saying that the presence of peace and stability will foster increased focus by conflict-affected countries on thwarting any WMD activity by non-State actors in their countries and regions, thereby not only making the success of the sustaining peace agenda even more imperative, but also that of the deeply interconnected 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Thirteen out of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals have direct relevance to nuclear science and technology, and it is crucial that the discourse on WMD proliferation by non-State actors does not impinge on the inalienable right of States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. My delegation also stresses that the issue of WMD acquisition by non-State groups should be considered by all United Nations States Members in an inclusive manner, and our actions should flow from multilaterally negotiated instruments.

As the Security Council tackles threats to global peace, it must be principled and clear. The risk that non-State actors might acquire nuclear and other WMDs is only one among a list of serious global security problems. A key challenge that remains is the insistence by some States to possess nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. There is no such thing as right and moral hands for holding such wrong and immoral weapons. Furthermore, my delegation remains concerned about the fact that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has yet to enter into force.

The international community can be proud of having adopted legally binding instruments and banned biological and chemical weapons through its clear moral imperative and dedicated multilateral efforts.

Yet, confronted with the horrors that Hiroshima and Nagasaki endured and the abundant research confirming the absolute destruction that nuclear weapons, by design or accident, can wreak, it is deeply disturbing that some States have hindered the same approach on nuclear weapons, as is also mandated by article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

However, with the ongoing multilateral endeavour in the United Nations conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination, the recent meetings of the Open-ended Working Group for the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament, and the disarmament activism by global civil society, Indonesia sees some signs of hope. We therefore have joined the overwhelmingly large number of countries in urging reluctant States to heed the calls for banning nuclear weapons and achieving their total elimination.

Let us be on the right side of history when it comes to the survival of humankind from the menacing threat of nuclear explosions, either by design or accident. It is our earnest hope that the Council, just as it is rightly seized by the WMD proliferation concern, will display the same vigour with regard to nuclear disarmament from which the legitimacy for non-proliferation is born.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Paraguay.

Mr. Arriola Ramírez (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of the Republic of Paraguay expresses its gratitude for the briefings by the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and the representative of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in connection with the international effort to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors, and commends the Bolivian presidency of the Security Council for holding this open debate.

The Republic of Paraguay works closely with the Counter-Terrorism Committee, the delegation of which headed by its Executive Director visited our country in March and held meetings with the highest-ranking officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and those dealing with homeland security, the prevention of money laundering and customs. During its visit, the Committee was able to see at first-hand the efforts undertaken by the Republic of Paraguay to adhere to international norms in combating terrorism in all its forms, as well as the implementation of public policies aimed at preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors, especially in the border areas of the country.

During its visit, the Committee was able to note the need for technical assistance and specialized teams in Paraguay so as to effectively and efficiently implement mechanisms and policies aimed at preventing all forms of terrorism and cross-border criminal activity linked to it. Consequently, at the request of the Paraguayan Government, the Committee is considering a follow-up mission this year during which it will hold meetings with officials from the legislative and judicial branches. Furthermore, the Republic of Paraguay participates actively in training activities, as it did in the regional training course for the points of contact of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), held recently in Chile.

The delegation of Paraguay reaffirms its conviction that the fight against terrorism in all its forms must contribute to the maintenance of international stability and security; encourage cooperation and friendly relations between States, while respecting their national sovereignty; and be based on the rule of law, respect for human rights in the broadest terms and the fundamental freedoms of individuals under international law.

In conclusion, the delegation of Paraguay calls on the States Members of the United Nations to reallocate the resources budgeted for the modernization of their stockpiles to efforts aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular target 4 of Sustainable Development Goal 16 — to significantly reduce illicit arms flows and combat all forms of organized crime.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Schieb (Germany): I would like to thank you, Sir, for convening this open debate on a very pressing issue.

I align myself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and the statement to be made by the representative of Spain on behalf of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004). I would like to make the following four points.

First, the use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists is a growing threat. Since 2013, the repeated use of chemical weapons in Syria, particularly by the Syrian regime but also by Islamic State in Iraq and

the Levant (ISIL), as well as ISIL's use of chemical weapons in Iraq, has dramatically exacerbated concerns about the use of those universally condemned weapons. However, holding the perpetrators accountable for those heinous acts remains a major challenge. We believe that preventing non-State actors from accessing chemical weapons and their precursors is the most effective way to prevent non-State actors from ultimately using them.

For that reason, Germany supported the international community's efforts to remove and destroy the remaining stocks of chemical-weapon precursors in Libya. The German Government is contributing to those efforts by allowing the precursors to be destroyed at a specialized facility in Germany. To address these growing risks, it is crucial that the international community continue to strengthen the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and support capacity-building in countries in which proliferation risks exist. The Group of Seven's global partnership plays an active role in that area, and Germany contributes to those activities through its partnership programme on biological and health security.

Secondly, together with its partners, Germany is pushing for a treaty to end fissile material production. By limiting the pool of available fissile material, such a treaty could significantly reduce the risk of non-State actors acquiring those highly dangerous materials. We congratulate Canada for the progress that it has made towards that goal while chairing the High-level Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty Expert Preparatory Group.

The international community has also made great progress in the field of nuclear security. The Nuclear Security Summit process has not only drawn worldwide attention to the risks of nuclear terrorism, but has also triggered concrete actions and initiatives to close existing gaps. We encourage all Member States to adopt existing legal norms such as the amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Furthermore, those Member States that require assistance to fully implement those norms must be able to turn to the international community for sustainable support. Germany is one of the major donors to relevant organizations and bodies. For example, Germany contributes substantially to the Nuclear Security Fund of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which supports nuclear security capacity-building projects. We count on others to follow our example.

Thirdly, in our globalized world, the private sector has an important role to play in non-proliferation. After all, it is the private sector that must implement export controls and adhere to non-proliferation legislation. In recognition of this fact, Germany initiated the Wiesbaden process with the support of many other Member States and in cooperation with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. The process seeks to increase private sector engagement in the context of resolution 1540 (2004). The next Wiesbaden conference, in late November, will focus on due diligence by private sector companies and questions related to cross-border development and production. We have initiated a similar dialogue with industry through the Nuclear Security Contact Group.

Fourthly, last year's comprehensive review of resolution 1540 (2004) proved to be a useful exercise. Germany especially supports the aim to reinforce the role of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) in facilitating technical assistance, particularly by improving the matching mechanism. We welcome all other initiatives that seek to strengthen resolution 1540 (2004) in the long term, such as the work of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540, in which Germany actively participates. Together with partner nations and international organizations, Germany will continue to play its part in reducing the global risk of terrorism perpetrated with weapons of mass destruction.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am delighted to see you, Sir, presiding over today's meeting of the Security Council.

(*spoke in English*)

On behalf of 51 — may I repeat, 51 — members of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004), I would like to stress the relevance of today's debate. I will now highlight the main elements of our statement, as the full version has been circulated.

Resolution 2325 (2016) reaffirms that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security. We see proliferation taking place in the Middle East and in Asia. We condemn proliferation in all possible forms by anyone and we will make every effort to prevent it.

In that connection, we condemn in the strongest terms the nuclear-weapon and ballistic-missile-development activities conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in flagrant violation of Security Council resolutions.

That threat is more pressing than ever because of the risk that terrorists and other non-State actors might acquire and use such weapons, in addition to the rapid advances in science, technology and international commerce. Unfortunately, we have seen that that threat has materialized in Syria, Iraq and Malaysia. The use of chemical weapons undermines the hard-won taboo of those atrocious weapons, contrary to the norms established by the international community and upheld by the Organization for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (OPCW).

We strongly condemn the use of chemical weapons by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant in Syria, as confirmed by the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism. In order to stem the risk of further chemical-weapon use by any party in Syria, we urge the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate fully with OPCW to fulfil its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

In that regard, we support the global approach that advocates the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), established pursuant to resolution 2325 (2016). First, a specific approach must be adopted so as to allocate resources to areas where they are most needed, all the while taking into consideration the circumstances unique to each State. In more concrete terms, we believe that the chemical and biological sectors require greater attention, in particular in terms of inventory control procedures, the protection of related materials and the relative accessibility of such materials, including formulating a more urgent response to the issue.

Secondly, it is important for States, at the very least, to criminalize the reckless funding of activities that lead to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regardless of whether or not they are linked to terrorist activities, and to establish national control mechanisms to prevent them.

Thirdly, the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) demands not only the adoption of legislation, but its enforcement and the establishment of national controls. A good example is the compilation of national lists to monitor and control materials that can be used for proliferation purposes. We encourage those States that have not yet done so to develop such controls. It is also important to strengthen cybersecurity, in particular in sensitive sectors.

Fourthly, it is imperative that resolution 1540 (2004) be fully implemented. We encourage States that have not done so to submit their first report. We also encourage States to provide additional information on implementation and good practices, consider developing voluntary national action plans, identify effective focal points and maintain ongoing dialogue with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), including through visits by the Committee. In that regard, we welcome Morocco's initiative to host a training session for African contact points. We underscore the importance of assistance and welcome capacity-building through bilateral contributions to the trust fund managed by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. We stand ready to assist States at their request in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

(*spoke in English*)

We welcome increased cooperation between the United Nations and relevant international and regional organizations, as well as among the relevant Security Council committees, in combating proliferation. In that effort, parliamentarians and civil society, in particular industry and academia, also have a role to play.

Finally, we acknowledge the key role played by Bolivia as it leads the 1540 Committee and highlight the importance of transparency. A good example of such transparency is today's open debate. In view of the current threats and challenges, we believe that the Committee needs to have in place an adequate support structure so that it can assist States and more efficiently monitor implementation.

Rest assured, Sir, of our continued support to the work of the Committee and to your chairmanship.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Cuba.

Mrs. Rodriguez Abascal (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Bolivia for having convened today's open debate and through you, Ambassador Llorentty Soliz, I congratulate your entire team on its excellent work in presiding over the Security Council.

Cuba supports the statement made by the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Our country shares the legitimate concerns of the international community about the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. Limiting international efforts to the horizontal non-proliferation of such weapons is insufficient. The only effective way to stop the acquisition and use of nuclear weapons, including by terrorists, is through the prohibition and total elimination of such weapons in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner. Our country does not possess, nor does it intend to possess, weapons of mass destruction, and it has adopted a series of measures to guarantee strict compliance with the commitments and obligations it undertook as a State party to the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and as a member State of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Cuba participates actively in ongoing negotiations at the General Assembly on a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination. We support the adoption, entry into force and implementation of such an international instrument. Similarly, we will continue to advocate the adoption, as soon as possible, of a broad-based convention that encompasses the elimination of nuclear weapons within a specific time frame and under strict international verification. We reiterate the need to start negotiations, without delay, on a legally binding protocol that would effectively, comprehensively and equitably strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention. The meeting of the States parties to that Convention to be held in December should include among its priorities the adoption of a clear mandate for resuming the negotiating process in that regard.

In a year in which we commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the Chemical Weapons Convention, as one of the first signatories and a State party to the Convention, Cuba reiterates its firm rejection of the use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances. We reject, and call for the immediate elimination of, those unilateral measures designed to prohibit or limit the legitimate right of States to access and use nuclear energy, biological agents and chemicals for peaceful purposes, as well as the relevant technologies and know-how.

In the light of the danger posed by the existence of weapons of mass destruction and their possible use, cooperation on the part of the international community must be strengthened.

The fight against terrorism must be based on the effective implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, in strict compliance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

The efforts of the Security Council cannot undermine the existing multilateral treaties on weapons of mass destruction, the international organizations established in that regard, or the role of the General Assembly.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Ms. Mac Loughlin (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, for having proposed this open debate on a particularly topical subject, namely, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Spain on behalf of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004).

I would like to say how pleased we are to see a brotherly country chairining the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), given our region's unwavering commitment to non-proliferation. Latin America and the Caribbean were pioneers in establishing a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. Likewise, we welcome the adoption of the declaration of the States members of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) on the fiftieth anniversary of the conclusion of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

There are many highly distressing cases in which international terrorism has shown ample proof of its destructive capacity. The use of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors in recent years has ceased to be an abstract or theoretical problem and has served to highlight the need for Member States to redouble their efforts to prevent terrorist groups from gaining access to weapons of mass destruction, their related materials and means of delivery.

For Argentina, by its scope and nature, resolution 1540 (2004) represents the clearest response by the United Nations to the problem of weapons of mass

destruction and their access by non-State actors. Since its adoption, 13 years ago, Argentina has addressed the resolution by striving to preserve the balance between its traditional commitment to non-proliferation and a reaffirmation of the sovereign right to the peaceful use and development of advanced technologies such as nuclear, chemical, biological, pharmaceutical and nanotechnology. Both principles are enshrined in the text of resolution 1540 (2004) as well as in resolution 2325 (2016), co-sponsored by our country and adopted only six months ago. In that context, on 26 October 2004, the Republic of Argentina submitted its first national report, together with successive updates, thereby demonstrating its unwavering commitment to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and becoming an active member of the five non-proliferation regimes, as well as the Proliferation Security Initiative.

Member States should redouble efforts to strengthen and update our national export control systems, which we believe should be based on four fundamental pillars: a transparent and standardized national licensing system; effective compliance with current legislation applicable to export controls, including brokering and trans-shipment aspects; increased corporate awareness of the importance of such systems for industrial development and for the security of international trade; and close regional cooperation.

With regard to regional cooperation, I wish to emphasize that Argentina provides assistance under resolution 1540 (2004) and has developed training activities on identifying sensitive items at subregional and regional levels, as well as through South-South cooperation with African countries.

Argentina considers it essential to ensure that dual-use chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials are properly protected, and out of the hands of those who would not hesitate to use them to terrorize others and sow panic and destruction. It is illusory to believe that we live in security while there are such materials lacking the proper protection, and without the implementation of international regulations at the global level.

In particular, for Argentina, the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material has been in force for more than a year. Last April in Buenos Aires, together with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the National Institute of Industrial Technology, we organized the second Regional Course on Chemical Safety and Security Management in Laboratories.

Argentina is convinced that, beyond the protection of materials that we can guarantee at the national level, we must work constructively to foster dialogue between nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon countries, with the understanding that the only guarantee that such weapons or related materials will not be acquired by non-State actors would be their total elimination.

Lastly, Argentina reiterates its call for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and calls upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon its nuclear military programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, in accordance with the resolutions of the Security Council. Those programmes represent a threat to international peace and security.

The Argentine delegation would also like to say that the call for the complete elimination of chemical weapons is a key element of its position on non-proliferation and disarmament. In that context, Argentina firmly reiterates its absolute condemnation of the use of chemical weapons and the use of chemicals as weapons by any actor and under any circumstance.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. Lal (India): I thank you, Sir, for convening this open debate. In the interests of time, I will read out only parts of our statement.

Terror networks and non-State actors by themselves do not have any capacity or access to advanced and sensitive technologies and materials. However instances of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) are not unknown to us all. The possibility of such collusion remains a real cause for concern. That grave threat can only be contained through effective and sustained international cooperation and monitoring.

As a country with advanced nuclear technologies, India is fully conscious of the responsibilities that come with their possession. India is a party to all of the 13 universal instruments accepted as benchmarks for a State's commitment to combat international terrorism.

India participated at the ministerial level in the 2013 and 2016 International Conferences on Nuclear Security organized by the International Atomic Energy

Agency, which plays a central role in promoting nuclear security efforts. Our Prime Minister has participated in all of the four Nuclear Security Summits held since 2010. India also participates actively in the Nuclear Security Contact Group. India has contributed to the goals and objectives of the Chemical Weapons Convention and participates actively in the inter-sessional process on the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

Since 2002, India has introduced at the General Assembly draft resolution entitled "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction", which has been adopted by consensus every year, most recently in 2016 as resolution 71/38, co-sponsored by more than 70 Member States. The resolution offers a consensus platform to strengthen international dialogue and cooperation.

India has harmonized its legislative and regulatory framework with the control lists, guidelines and best practices of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Australia Group. India's admission to the MTCR, a year ago, is a recognition of India's non-proliferation record and its ability to contribute to global non-proliferation efforts. Last year, India also joined The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation.

We appreciate the efforts of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and collaborate with the 1540 Committee to organize capacity-building and awareness-raising events. India is currently planning to host an international workshop in cooperation with UNODA and the 1540 Committee in New Delhi.

We have taken note of the requests for assistance put forward by countries to the 1540 Committee and remain ready to provide technical assistance and training to any interested Member State. Details on the technical expertise offered by India can be accessed through our latest report submitted to the 1540 Committee this month.

India's Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership has conducted more than 30 international and regional programmes, involving more than 300 participants from around 30 countries. In February, India hosted the meeting of the Implementation and Assessment Group of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. It was attended by more than 150 representatives from over 40 partner countries, as well as by the International Atomic Energy Agency, INTERPOL, the European Union and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

An early conclusion to the negotiations on the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism would be helpful. We support universal adherence to, and the full implementation of, the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, as well as its 2005 amendment.

Unmasked clandestine proliferation networks have shown that non-State actors can exploit weak links in global supply chains. All States must therefore assume their responsibilities to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors. The measures undertaken by India in that regard are consistent with the highest international standards and are highlighted in India's latest national report to the 1540 Committee. We must remain vigilant, strengthen cooperation, build capacity and encourage the full assumption of national responsibility by States, in accordance with their international obligations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Armenia.

Mr. Mnatsakanyan (Armenia): We thank the Bolivian presidency for the inclusion of this important agenda item in the programme of work of the Security Council and for the comprehensive concept note.

Armenia attaches great importance to the effective implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and has been submitting regular reports on the measures taken by national authorities to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). An important development in strengthening the implementation of, and compliance with, the provisions of that resolution was the adoption of resolution 2325 (2016), in December 2016, which we co-sponsored together with other 76 States. We also commend the initiative of Spain to establish a Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004).

There is widespread recognition of the threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists and non-State groups, heightened by the rapid advances in science, technology and international commerce that could give rise to a risk of the misuse of scientific developments.

Capacity-building and the strengthening of institutional arrangements at the national level are the necessary prerequisites to address the existing and emerging threats associated with the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to counter the growing risk of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorists and non-State groups.

The Government of Armenia has been consistent in reinforcing the implementation of the provisions of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 2325 (2016) at the national level. We have been enacting a broad range of legislative and administrative measures aimed at safeguarding radioactive and nuclear material, strengthening border security against the smuggling of hazardous materials and enhancing capacities to investigate and prosecute any such incidents. Rigid legislative safeguards have been put in place for the licensing and physical protection of nuclear and radioactive material. The criminal code has been amended with a view to significantly increasing the term of sentences for the illicit trafficking, import, export or re-export of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear materials.

Significant steps have also been taken in the field of biological security. In particular, in 2016 Armenia adopted a national programme on the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention. The programme aims at increasing awareness among the population, ensuring the accreditation of existing laboratories in accordance with international standards, establishing a network of such laboratories, as well as securing adequate professional competence of employees working with biological agents. Furthermore, the Government has set up an inter-agency working group to ensure the implementation of the provisions of the Convention.

In November 2016, Armenia also adopted a national strategy related to chemical, biological, radiological materials, which outlines the threats and risks in the field and respective measures to address the emerging challenges.

With a view to strengthening the international legal framework in combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Armenia has supported the initiative to establish an international legal instrument for the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism.

We encourage the 1540 Committee to continue its cooperation with relevant international and regional organizations based on comparative advantages and best practices developed on the ground. In that respect, an effective response to the specific needs of States, upon their request, could bring together the efforts of all actors on the ground, including donor States. We recognize and support the role of regional organizations and multilateral initiatives in promoting the comprehensive implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in particular has been instrumental in facilitating the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) by its participating States.

The Global Initiative to Combat Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, as a partnership of 88 States to promote global nuclear security, has been an important and useful platform to facilitate cooperation aimed at nuclear detection, nuclear forensics, response and mitigation of threats.

We condemn the use of chemical weapons by anyone and in any part of the world and highlight the importance of verifiable, transparent and internationally mandated investigation of any alleged use of chemical substances banned under international law.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. Bonser (Canada) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Bolivia for convening this debate on the grave threat posed to international peace and security by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors.

Canada is pleased to align itself with the statement of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004), and would like to make the following additional three points.

First, Canada fully supports resolution 1540 (2004) and its successor resolutions as essential to the international non-proliferation architecture. Indeed, we all need to step-up our efforts to achieve its full and universal implementation as quickly as possible.

(*spoke in English*)

As a co-sponsor of resolution 2325 (2016), Canada particularly welcomed measures aimed at strengthening assistance requests and mechanisms. To support those measures, we are pleased to announce funding to the Stimson Center to implement a 1540 assistance support initiative. This initiative will create a new website with a comprehensive list of assistance providers and help to develop more detailed and strategic requests

for assistance. It aims to provide the Office for Disarmament Affairs and committed States Members of the United Nations with an action plan for more effectively transmitting assistance requests through the 1540 Committee. We are also providing new funding for several other projects related to resolution1540 (2004), including continued support for a Caribbean Community regional 1540 coordinator, and further assistance to partner countries in Latin America and the Caribbean for legislative implementation.

Secondly, we recognize that fast-evolving proliferation risks and advances in science, technology and commerce demand dynamic and flexible responses. Domestically, Canada is strengthening its counter-proliferation capabilities by increasing funding and amending legislation to better control brokering activitie, and weapon-of-mass destruction-related exports. We continue to monitor advances in science and technology and promote responsible innovation. Through targeted outreach, we are educating stakeholders about the proliferation risks associated with chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear sensitive technologies and dual-use goods. Internationally, under Canada's chairmanship, the Nuclear Security Contact Group is working to identify and address new and emerging challenges to nuclear security.

Thirdly, Canada is pleased to chair the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group to prepare the way for negotiating a treaty to end fissile material production for nuclear weapons. A fissile material cut-off treaty would reduce the risk of non-State actors acquiring these materials, thereby enhancing global nuclear security and reducing the risk of nuclear terrorism.

In conclusion, Canada stands ready to partner in relevant and constructive ways with all interested national and regional parties to address the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Greece.

Mr. Kalamverzos (Greece): Allow me, at the outset, to stress that Greece aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the observer of the European Union, which highlighted the unwavering support for the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004).

I would like to express my appreciation for the timely discussion initiated by the Bolivian presidency, in particular you, Ambassador Llorentty Soliz, which allows us to take stock of what we have so far achieved and to discuss how we will navigate in future in keeping with resolution 2325 (2016), which was the result of the 2016 comprehensive review of the resolution 1540 (2004), a pillar of the international non-proliferation architecture.

I would also like to thank Ms. Nakamitsu and Mr. Ballard for their excellent briefings.

In brief, Greece maintains the view that, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, the world finds itself in a situation of constant change and has been confronted with multiple challenges. All of that is happening within a volatile global security environment and in a fragile and unstable political and socioeconomic landscape in strategically important regions.

The proliferation of the threat of weapons of mass destruction that we are discussing today is a very complex challenge. Volatility, instability and regional crises and conflicts, as well as a galloping rate of technological advances in science and global commerce, render more alarming the risk that non-State actors, namely, terrorist groups, may seek to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

Specific resolutions to address that threat do not exist, and might not be the answer. With that in mind, we stand, first and foremost, for reducing the root causes of instability, strengthening multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties, supporting relevant multilateral institutions, mainstreaming non-proliferation into broad policies and fully implementing resolution 1540 (2004). We also stand for vigilance and inclusivity at the national, regional and international levels in coping with that challenge so as to enable us to embark upon more coherent and holistic ways to combat it further on.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Namibia.

Mr. Gertze (Namibia): First of all, I would like to express my appreciation to you, Sir, for convening this open debate on the question of non-proliferation. This debate promotes transparency and inclusivity. Let me also congratulate the delegation of the State of Bolivia for its successful work of presiding over the business of the Security Council during the month of June.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the Bolivarian

Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

On many occasions, the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, has expressed that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is a threat to international peace and security. That was demonstrated when the Security Council sent out a strong message in 2004 by adopting resolution 1540 (2004), which offers a response to the growing risk that weapons of mass destruction could fall into the hands of, and be used by, non-State actors and terrorist groups.

Resolution 1540 (2004) provides an opportunity to deepen cooperation among the countries of the world so as to access technology and the required capacity to respond to the threat posed by terrorist groups and other illegal armed groups. The physical protection of nuclear materials and installations and adequate guarantees for the peaceful use of nuclear material and technology are fundamental to establishing a favourable environment for developing nuclear energy that benefits humankind.

Namibia understands the relevance of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) as, first, to ensure the right of all Member States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy for the development and advancement of technology, and, secondly, to ensure the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, whether nuclear, chemical or biological, as well as their means of delivery and related technologies. In that regard, we reiterate the sovereign right of Member States to the development of advanced technologies, such as nuclear, chemical, biological and pharmaceutical ones, so as to achieve industrial development.

Namibia continues to participate in the activities of the international community in the area of disarmament with a view to achieve a world free of weapons of mass destruction and the complete prohibition of their acquisition, development, stockpiling, transferring and modernization. It is our belief that cooperation between Member States and the relevant regional and international organizations will strengthen national capacities to help prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including their acquisition by non-State actors and terrorist groups.

As a State party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC), Namibia welcomes the implementation of that Convention, which is the only comprehensive multilateral treaty banning the whole group of weapons of mass destruction, while also providing for a verification system and promoting the use of chemicals for peaceful purposes. Namibia believes that the main focus of the CWC should remain the complete elimination of all categories of chemical weapons.

Similarly, Namibia considers the Biological Weapons Convention as representing an important component of the international legal architecture related to weapons of mass destruction, while noting with concern that the lack of a verification system continues to pose a challenge to the effectiveness of that Convention.

All pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) should be treated in a balanced approach. The failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference has raised serious questions about the future of the international non-proliferation and disarmament regime. The reaffirmation of deterrence doctrines, modernization plans and long-term investments in nuclear-weapon programmes only serve to undermine the legitimacy of the non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Those trends pose serious challenges to disarmament initiatives.

In conclusion, my delegation welcomes the successful conclusion of the Open-Ended Working Group for the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD IV). We underscore the importance of convening SSOD IV, as it would offer an opportunity to review the most critical aspects of the disarmament machinery and mobilize the international community and public opinion in favour of the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. It would also enhance the total control and reduction of conventional weapons, which can be easily acquired by non-State actors.

We also welcome the ongoing conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading to their total elimination. We note with appreciation the successful outcome of the first session of the conference and look forward to another successful outcome of its second session.

Let me assure you, Sir, that Namibia continues to stand fully behind this important global effort to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

Mr. Bande (Nigeria): I thank the Bolivian delegation for convening this important debate on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. I also commend the briefers for their remarks

I align my delegation with the statement made by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

I wish to reaffirm Nigeria's commitment to the ideal of a nuclear-free world. We regard the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery as a grave threat to our collective security. The risk of non-State actors, including terrorists, acquiring, developing, manufacturing and using nuclear, chemical and biological weapons remains a serious threat to global peace and security. Terrorists and their sponsors have shown the intent and, at least in the case of chemical weapons, some capability to develop and acquire weapons of mass destruction and use them.

The adoption of resolution 1540 (2004), 11 years ago, signalled the determination of the Security Council to respond robustly to the threat posed to international peace and security by the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery. While the three main treaties on nuclear, chemical and biological weapons address non-proliferation, it is evident that they do not take into account the possibility of such weapons falling into the hands of non-State actors. Therein lies the significance of resolution 1540 (2204) in its complementarity to the three global treaties on weapons of mass destruction. The emergence of extremist groups has introduced a sense of urgency to the need for the international community to take stock of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and close the gaps that could be exploited by such groups to obtain and use weapons of mass destruction.

An appraisal of the mandate of this significant resolution shows a measure of commitment on the part of Member States. Numerous countries have adopted laws and regulations that comply with a substantial number of the obligations set out in resolution 1540 (2004). They are reference points and useful mechanisms for confidence-building measures, including those that could assist in addressing actions that could promote the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, such as the menace of smuggling and money-laundering activities in all regions. That is as a result of the need to relentlessly address the yawning compliance gap often encountered by Member States with limited resources and technical capabilities.

Nigeria believes that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones across the world is a potent tool to prevent the vertical and horizontal proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Success in that direction would promote transparency in non-proliferation, which is the second pillar of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Nigeria will continue to support efforts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in parts of the world where they currently do not exist. We recognize the right of any party to pursue a peaceful nuclear programme. However, it must be pursued within the ambit of the NPT and other relevant international instruments. We stress that efforts aimed at nuclear non-proliferation should tally with simultaneous efforts aimed at nuclear disarmament.

Nigeria is concerned about the slow pace of progress towards nuclear disarmament and the lack of progress by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the task of the total elimination of their nuclear stockpiles. We call on the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their multilateral legal obligations on nuclear disarmament.

We appreciate the role of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) in assisting States and international institutions in the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, especially by considering requests from States regarding the provision of technical assistance in the energy and extractive industries. That allows States and institutions to implement the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Nigeria wishes to stress that resolution 1540 (2004) and its effective implementation remain a key component of the global architecture for countering the danger posed by the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We are convinced that the establishment of effective precautionary measures and systems to address potential nuclear, chemical or biological proliferation is a collective responsibility incumbent upon all Member States, and we must all take the lead.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate Nigeria's conviction of the validity of multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. We must remain especially vigilant to issues that may threaten international peace and security. We shall therefore

continue to advocate for multilateralism as the core platform for negotiations in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Slovenia.

Mr. Logar (Slovenia): First, I would like to thank the delegation of Bolivia for convening today's important debate and for preparing the concept note on reinforcing the preventive system to avoid the different kinds of catastrophes that could result from the use of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons by non-State actors, particularly terrorists.

Slovenia fully subscribes to the statement made by the observer of the European Union and to the statement made on behalf of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004). I would like to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

Slovenia has been supporting the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) to strengthen global capacity to prevent, detect and respond to the use of weapons of mass destruction for terrorist purposes by, first, joining the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004) to help contribute to better transparency and the resolution's implementation; secondly, submitting four national reports on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004); and, thirdly, expanding the Slovenia-led Western Balkan counter-terrorism initiative, which links up individual initiatives in that area into a joint comprehensive effort — the integrative internal security governance concept — that includes the prevention of violent extremism, fights terrorism and takes measures to combat organized crime and enhance border security.

Fourthly, Slovenia also contributes by attaching great importance to nuclear security through the involvement of several ministries in nuclear security matters in order to fight the illicit trafficking of radioactive and nuclear materials and, lastly, by playing an active role in the work of the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency for the third time since our independence.

Slovenia had informed the Council about the practical measures it adopted to prevent non-State actors from accessing weapons of mass destruction technology in the open debate on resolution 1540 (2004) in December 2016 (see S/PV.7837). Let me just briefly mention the most recent ones.

In March, we joined the Nuclear Security Contact Group, through which we will contribute to global efforts in that area to achieve and enhance nuclear security. We also took over the co-rapporteur role to Montenegro as it aspires to become a member of the Wassenaar Arrangement, which deals with promoting transparency and greater responsibility in the transfers of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies, as well as with the prevention of the acquisition of those items by terrorists. This year Slovenia also chairs the General Working Group of the Wassenaar Arrangement to help contribute to that goal.

In conclusion, there is a growing link between terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and cyberthreats. Cyberterrorism is perhaps the most prominent emerging threat in the nuclear realm, based on rapid advances in science and technology. That is why Slovenia is reviewing our national legislation and measures in that area of endeavour and we will report on the review when it has been concluded.

Let me reassure you, Sir, that Slovenia will continue to implement resolution 1540 (2004), as well as the recommendations of the comprehensive review, and we call upon all States to do the same.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Mr. Kim In Ryong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Let me express my appreciation to you, Sir, for convening today's important debate.

We join with previous speakers to support the statement of the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

At the outset, I condemn in the strongest terms and categorically reject the reckless remarks made by hostile forces, including the United States, Japan, the United Kingdom, France, Spain and the Republic of Korea. Taking the opportunity offered by today's open debate, they once again called into question the measures taken by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to bolster its self-defence capabilities, and referenced the use of chemical weapons that have never existed, while branding the Republic as a threat to world peace and regional security and a country that violates Security Council resolutions.

This is nothing but an outrageous breach of the sovereignty of the Democratic People's Republic of

Korea. Everyone recalls that, in February this year, the hostile forces tried to use the death of a citizen of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to step up their human rights racket against the Republic and spread rumours about its use of chemical weapons or weapons of mass destruction, in a bid to create an atmosphere of international criticism against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Once again, I hereby strongly denounce the reckless remarks against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by hostile forces, for the dangerous political purpose of tarnishing the dignified image of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and weakening its social system by spreading such ruinous rumours on the international stage.

On the occasion of today's open debate on the theme of global efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors, once again, I would like to clarify and emphasize the policy of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The respected Supreme Leader Comrade Kim Jong Un, in his remarkable statement made at the historic seventh Congress of the Worker's Party of Korea, clearly affirmed before the world that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as a responsible nuclear-weapon State, would not use nuclear weapons first, unless the forces of aggression that are hostile to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea violate its sovereignty with their nuclear weapons; and would faithfully observe its commitments to nuclear non-proliferation, which it agreed to before the international community, and strive for global denuclearization.

We are seriously concerned by the fact that the United States and its vassal forces again picked a fight with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea over its self-defence strengthening measures under the pretext of non-proliferation. I would like to clarify the principled position of my Government.

It is clear that the main root cause of the grave situation on the Korean peninsula, which is inching to the brink of war and is shrouded in nuclear war clouds, is the hostile outdated policy and manoeuvres of the United States aimed at provoking a war against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Needless to say, as everybody witnessed, the joint military exercises Key Resolve and Foal Eagle 2017, which were carried out by the United States on the Korean peninsula over 60 days in March and April this year and which introduced the largest-ever mass aggressive forces and sufficient strategic assets to wage another full-scale war, are very dangerous and reckless aggressive war drills that constitute grave threats to the peace and security on the Korean peninsula and beyond in the region and are acts of State-sponsored terrorism against a sovereign State. Those kinds of extreme, provocative military manoeuvres by the United States continue even after the end of the joint military exercises.

The United States staged the madcap pre-emptive nuclear strike drills against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea after deploying two nuclear carrier strike groups in the East Sea of Korea and introducing B-1B strategic bombers from the Guam Island. They even brought a nuclear submarine into the Port of Busan in South Korea and held a missile interception test simulating the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's intercontinental ballistic missile attack on 30 May. On 20 June, the United States introduced two B-1B nuclear strategic bombers into the airspace of South Korea to conduct simulation bombing exercises, and it is openly arguing that it would send strategic bombers to the Korean peninsula more than once a month. Now it has introduced the monster-like Terminal High Altitude Area Defense missile defence system in South Korea in order to aggravate the tensions and turn the Korean peninsula into a radioactive zone. On 1 June, the United States publicly imposed unilateral sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and, on 3 June, it spearheaded the fabrication of another sanctions resolution through a vote of the Security Council.

The United States is stepping up its military buildup, including modernizing its nuclear weapons, just in order to obtain exclusive and permanent possession of the most sophisticated weapon system in the world, but other countries are not allowed to test or launch any nuclear- or ballistic-related object. It is really the height of shameless arrogance, self-righteousness and double standards. That the United States forced others to agree to the sanctions resolution, which had been fabricated in a back room at its own pleasure, and described the resolution as the will of the international community is a flagrant example of high-handedness and of its trampling upon international justice and an arbitrary act in pursuit of its own interests.

It is a fatal miscalculation if the countries that had a hand in the frame-up of the sanctions resolution think that they can delay or keep in check the open

development of the nuclear forces of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea even for a moment. They will clearly see that their means and indiscreet acts run counter to their objectives.

The buildup of nuclear forces by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a natural exercise of its sovereignty to thwart the nuclear threat imposed by the United States against our country in an unprecedented way. It is also an effort to ensure genuine international justice and peace and security on the Korean peninsula and in the region.

To this day, the United States continues to talk about dialogue, but it does not make any sense to talk about dialogue when unjust preconditions are attached and extreme pressure is applied. Having undergone rigorous trials, the Korean people have arrived at the conclusion that the only way to defend their vital rights and sovereignty is to react to the nukes in kind. No matter what others say and whatever sanctions, pressure and military attacks may follow, we will not flinch from the path of building up our nuclear forces, which are used to defend the sovereignty of our country and our right to national existence.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's self-reliant nuclear force serves to guarantee and strengthen the peace of the Korean peninsula and the world.

I reaffirm my Government commitment to strengthening its national nuclear deterrent in every possible way to eliminate the source of nuclear threat and blackmail of the United States, which grows more desperate day by day, and to safeguard the peace and security of the Korean peninsula and the world.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Georgia.

Mr. Imnadze (Georgia): Let me thank the Bolivian presidency of the Security Council for convening this debate and for its successful chairmanship of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

My country aligns itself with the statements made by the observer of the European Union and by the representative of Spain on behalf of the Group of Friends of resolution 1540 (2004). In my national capacity, I would like to add the following remarks.

The risks of nuclear terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the related materials and technologies have become a serious threat and one of the major challenges to our common security. The chances of these weapons falling into the hands of unauthorized actors is particularly worrisome and alarming in view of the rapid advancements in science and technology.

Increasing threats emanating from terrorist groups make the exploitation of security vulnerabilities with criminal intent highly possible. Some actors have already demonstrated readiness to acquire and use weapons of mass destruction, as demonstrated in the reports by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism.

The threats posed by the proliferation of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) weapons and materials, as well as weapons of mass destruction and related technologies, remains a subject of serious concern for my country, not least due to the fact that we neighbour the regions with a risk of proliferation. In recent years, several attempts to smuggle nuclear and radioactive materials through Georgia's occupied regions were recorded. They were duly prevented by law enforcement agencies. However, in the absence of international presence inside those regions, it has become virtually impossible to conduct any type of verification activities on the ground, which increases the risk of proliferation of WMD-related materials.

Political commitment is crucial in developing the policies, strategies and systems to strengthen security at all levels. In that regard, full compliance with the obligations under the international arrangements, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention, and resolutions 1540 (2004) and 2325 (2016) and others, must stand as a priority for the international community.

Georgia believes that resolution 1540 (2004) remains the main pillar and overarching legal instrument in the multilateral non-proliferation architecture. We co-sponsored the new resolution 2325 (2016), unanimously adopted on 15 December, which clearly reaffirms that the proliferation of these weapons constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security and sets the basis for the pathway to achieve the full implementation of the obligations of resolution 1540 (2004).

Georgia has been taking various measures to that end. The Government established the National CBRN

Council, which, in consultation with the European Union, the United States and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), elaborated a national CBRN threat-reduction strategy and a CBRN national action plan for 2015-2019. Georgia is actively cooperating with the European Union and UNICRI within the framework of the CBRN Centres of Excellence to promote an integrated CBRN approach across South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Moldova and Ukraine. A CBRN regional secretariat has been opened and is now functioning in Georgia with the aim of contributing to the success of this project.

With support from our partners and in close cooperation with international experts, Georgia has developed a new legislative base, in force since 2014, for regulating its strategic export controls in full compliance with European standards. The relevant department in the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources Protection has been transformed into a public legal entity so as to increase its effective independence of the regulatory body, and a new department of radioactive-waste management has been created, putting radioactive-waste storage and disposal facilities under full State control nationwide, and supported through the development of a relevant legal framework.

To promote CBRN-related topics at the United Nations, the Governments of Georgia, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of the Philippines have established the United Nations Group of Friends of CBRN Risk Mitigation and Security Governance. The Group of Friends is a consultation and dialogue forum with the goal of integrating a CBRN component into the international security architecture, raising States' awareness of the importance of mitigating CBRN risks and fostering regional cooperation on CBRN challenges. It also promotes activities aimed at building capacity and developing capabilities between and among partner States, as well as implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). It is our belief that by promoting such joint efforts we can advance a robust preventive system against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I would like to thank the Bolivian delegation, Mr. President, for convening today's important meeting to exchange views on global efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction through non-State actors, as well as for the concept note on the topic.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and their means of delivery continues to pose a serious threat to international peace and security. Azerbaijan shares the international community's concern about the growing dangers and risks of that threat, and our strategic documents on national security and defence cite the proliferation of WMDs as a key security challenge.

For many parts of the world, including the South Caucasus, the direct relevance of resolution 1540 (2004) is obvious. The work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) is still vitally important. Azerbaijan greatly appreciates its activities, particularly its close interaction with Member States and increased cooperation with relevant international, regional and subregional organizations. As the 2016 comprehensive review of the status of the resolution's implementation noted, the rate of progress shows that achieving its full implementation is a long-term task that will require continued effort at the national, regional and international levels. In its resolution 2325 (2016), the Security Council re-emphasized the importance of ensuring that all States implement resolution 1540 (2004) fully and effectively.

Azerbaijan has consistently contributed to global efforts to promote peace and security, including in non-proliferation. Countering that menace is a priority area for our bilateral relations and international cooperation. Azerbaijan has always been a staunch supporter of the quest for a world free from weapons of mass destruction, including through the universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the establishment of WMD-free zones.

Trans-border threats such as international terrorism and the proliferation of WMDs demand that States pay special attention to the security of their borders. Both at the national level and through close cooperation with neighbouring countries and international partners within its bilateral security programmes, as well as with international organizations, Azerbaijan is doing its utmost to maintain comprehensive national border controls and management, along with export control systems. Its relevant State agencies are constantly working to enhance their counter-proliferation

capacities and physical protection measures and to improve inter-agency coordination and cooperation.

Areas where there is armed conflict, and especially those under foreign military occupation, often create conditions conducive to exploitation by terrorists, separatists and other criminal groups and increase the risk of illicit cross-border activities. It is critical to ensure that all States comply strictly with their international obligations, particularly those relating to respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and the inviolability of their international borders. However, that can hardly be achieved if those obligations are misinterpreted, made conditional or implemented with reservations, if not ignored altogether. When discussing efforts to prevent non-State actors from acquiring, developing, manufacturing, trafficking or using WMDs, therefore, attention should also be given to countering the policies and practices of States that instigate, support and direct such actors.

At a time when challenges to international peace and security continue unabated, more concerted action and synergy are required at all levels. By striving to implement resolution 1540 (2004) fully and effectively, Member States can contribute significantly to global non-proliferation efforts. Beyond that, there is still an acute need for international assistance to help individual Member States implement their obligations under the resolution, as well as for sustained support to cooperation and capacity-building.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that in order to ensure the effectiveness of strategies that have been collectively agreed on, we should first and foremost uphold fundamental principles and adhere to the uniform application of international law. Azerbaijan will continue to contribute to international efforts to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to support the work of the 1540 Committee.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Malaysia.

Mr. Mayong Onon (Malaysia): I thank the Security Council and its Bolivian presidency for convening today's open debate. I would also like to commend the briefings by Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, High Representative of Disarmament Affairs, and Mr. Joseph Ballard, of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, for their keen interest in and insights into the various areas where our engagement with resolution 1540 (2004) and its implementation can be further enhanced.

We also align ourselves with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

I believe it is important today to recognize the progress that the Security Council has made in enhancing the global framework designed to prevent non-State actors from acquiring nuclear, biological or chemical weapons of mass destruction. In that regard, we commend Spain for its leadership in steering the 2016 comprehensive review exercise of resolution 1540 (2004). As a result, we then witnessed the Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2325 (2016), and I would therefore like to stress that we will continue to spare no effort to work with the relevant stakeholders to strengthen and promote the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

For its part, Malaysia continues to meet its international obligations by further enhancing the enforcement and effectiveness of measures aimed at improving domestic controls preventing the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery, including by establishing appropriate controls over related materials. Malaysia also made amendments to strengthen its strategic trade act of 2010, which provides control over the export, trans-shipment, transit and brokering of strategic items, including arms and related materials, and other activities that could facilitate the design, development and production of WMDs and their delivery systems. The amended act was passed by the Malaysian Parliament on the 21 June 2017.

Among the amendments to the act were enhancements related to definitions and scope of implementation and on penalties designed to dictate serious repercussions for violations. Commensurate penalties are now provided for each offence under the strategic trade act; indeed, committing an offence under the act carries very severe penalties in the form of harsh fines and prison terms.

We reaffirm our commitment to engaging and working together with all Member States and the international community to collectively strive to maintain international peace and security by strengthening all global non-proliferation efforts, in cooperation with our partners here at the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Safaei (Islamic Republic of Iran): First of all, I would like to praise the Bolivian presidency of the Security Council and thank it for organizing today's open debate.

I would also like to align myself with the statement made by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. I would like to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

Iran is indeed one of the most serious victims of the use of chemical weapons in recent decades. Our people will never forget that they were exposed to hundreds of chemical attacks by the Saddam Hussein regime, while the Security Council remained silent. We strongly condemn the use of weapons of mass destruction by anyone anywhere.

Let me also react to the statement made this morning by the representative of the Israeli regime (see S/PV.7985). That statement contained unsubstantiated allegations against my country, fabricated to advance an Iranophobic agenda and, through that, to cover for and justify its aggressive and unlawful policies and practices committed against the whole region. I categorically reject all those allegations and wish to bring the following to the Council's attention.

It is very interesting to see the Israeli regime, an icon of total disregard for dozens of Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, including resolution 2334 (2016), and the principles of international law, a regime famous for its atrocities and apartheid policies with a well-known record of developing, producing and stockpiling different kinds of inhumane weapons, including weapons of mass destruction, gesticulating to complain about Iran's legitimate and conventional defence capabilities. The Israeli regime blatantly and flagrantly continues to flout all international regimes governing weapons of mass destruction by refusing to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. It is therefore is the only obstacle to the establishment of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

Nuclear weapons in the hands of the regime pose the most serious of threats to the security of all States in the Middle East and to the NPT regime. The Security Council has the responsibility to effectively address this threat. Moreover, it is now an established fact that Israeli agents are providing care to Da'esh operatives active in Syrian territory, proof of which is abundant.

As a country living in an unstable and volatile region, Iran is fully entitled to build a credible conventional capability to defend against any aggression. Iran's missile systems are part of its legitimate defence capabilities against the threats and intimidations that we are facing on an almost daily basis, especially by the Israeli regime. In that regard, I refer you, Mr. President, to our letter dated 19 May 2015 (S/2015/353). These systems are an exercise of our right to self-defence in the event of any armed attack against us. Iran will not start any war. We do not intend to attack any country, but if we come under attack, it is our legitimate right, under the Charter of the United Nations, to be able to use our national conventional defence capabilities to counter any aggression against our national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Iran will not tolerate actions that endanger its national security. We have always warned against terrorism and its expansion in the region. Our policies are based on cooperation with regional countries and the international community with a view to uprooting terrorism and extremism in the region and world.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The representative of Turkey has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Denktaş (Turkey): I will not dignify with a reply the ridiculous allegations made by the representative of the Syrian regime. I refute them in their entirety. Turkey has a well-established record on compliance with the weapons-of-mass- destruction non-proliferation regime. The use of chemical weapons is a violation of international law, Security Council resolutions and the Chemical Weapons Convention. It constitutes a crime against humanity. Its perpetrators must be held accountable. And the Syrian regime cannot and will not be held exempt from that.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

On behalf of the Security Council, I would like to thank all participants in today's open debate for their input, which will be very important for continuing the work, not only of the Council but also of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), on the topic that has brought us together for today's debate.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7986

Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

7986th meeting
Thursday, 29 June 2017, 9.30 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Llorentty Soliz	(Bolivia (Plurinational State of))
Members:	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	Ethiopia	Mr. Woldegerima
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Italy	Mr. Biagini
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	Ukraine	Mr. Ilnytskyi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force for the period from 2 March to 16 May 2017 (S/2017/486)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

17-18835 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 9.30 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force for the period from 2 March to 16 May 2017 (S/2017/486)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2017/547, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the Russian Federation and the United States of America.

I also wish to draw the Council's attention to document S/2017/486, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force for the period from 2 March to 16 May 2017.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2361 (2017).

The meeting rose at 9.35 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7987

Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

7987th meeting
Thursday, 29 June 2017, 9.35 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Llorentty Soliz	(Bolivia (Plurinational State of))
Members:	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	Ethiopia	Mr. Woldegerima
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Italy	Mr. Cardi
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mrs. Haley
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015) and 2332 (2016) (S/2017/541)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council. Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

17-18878 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 9.35 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015) and 2332 (2016) (S/2017/541)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Stephen O'Brien, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2017/541, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015) and 2332 (2016).

I now give the floor to Mr. O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien: The conflict in Syria continues to grind on, day by day, month by month. It is a conflict where there can be no victory on the battlefield, a conflict which will not end by the use of force. All that this relentless, senseless fighting provides are hollow advances or retreats, leaving behind utter devastation for the civilians left in its wake. I do not need to paint a picture for Council members. Members have seen them, along with the rest of the world. It is an outraged world, not an indifferent world, an indignant, furious world that cannot understand why the Security Council cannot fix the conflict.

We must be clear: 13.5 million people are caught in a protection crisis that threatens their lives on a daily basis. It affects so many because we have seen time and again a complete, disgraceful disregard for the rules of war, which subjects civilians to the horrifying reality of bombs raining down on schools, hospitals and residential areas every day. The use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in urban areas is unconscionable, with the utmost serious consequences for civilians in the immediate and long term. We know this. Those fighting know this. Those who support the different parties know it too. And certainly those civilians who have suffered years of war know this.

When explosive weapons are used in populated areas, 92 per cent of the people killed or injured are civilians — 92 per cent. And those who might be lucky enough to survive the bombs but whose homes are destroyed and are forced to flee face a whole new set of protection challenges, from mines and unexploded ordnance, to forced conscription, sexual abuse and violence, to restrictions on basic rights such as freedom of movement. It is our duty as fellow human beings to stand up and say, enough, to demand an end to these practices, to stop the needless death and to help those whose lives have already been destroyed.

Each month, the United Nations and humanitarian partners do all in our power, in the face of extreme difficulty, to reach those who are most in need. Again, my admiration for the courage and persistence of the humanitarian aid workers on the ground, from the United Nations and all our international and particularly national partners, knows no bounds, and I pay tribute to them. They should not be a target, but, sadly, in Syria today, they are.

So far this month we have reached the hard-to-reach locations of Talbiseh and Al-Rastan, in northern Homs, with convoys, and reached besieged east Harasta, in rural Damascus. Despite our best efforts, we continue to have supplies consistently removed from our trucks before we can even deploy. Nearly 200,000 treatments have been forcibly removed this year alone. The removal of these treatments is the removal of life-saving aid for those in need — treatments, medicines, a chance at life — and it must be brought to an end. We must be able to deliver based on need.

Further, the United Nations and humanitarian partners continue to be delayed and blocked by bureaucratic restrictions that limit our ability to reach civilians living in besieged and hard-to-reach areas. Delays in facilitation letters continue to slow the process for deploying inter-agency cross-line convoys. This need not be a cause for delay; they are not for the thousands of facilitation letters that are approved each month to areas where regular programming deploys. For example, the World Food Programme (WFP) requested 1,795 facilitation letters to provide aid, of which only three did not receive a positive response from authorities. Although the most egregious bureaucratic

restrictions are from the Government of Syria, we are increasingly seeing other groups operating in non-Government-controlled areas also implementing procedures that slow the process or impinge upon humanitarian principles.

I therefore call on all parties to the conflict to allow needs-based, unhindered and sustained access to humanitarian actors. They must also be safe. I am also placing on the record, here before the Council today — and asking it to do something about it — my specific concern regarding recent security threats against humanitarians delivering aid.

While we were eventually successful in delivering to east Harasta on 19 June, the case of an attempted convoy two days earlier illustrates the bureaucratic and security challenges faced by the United Nations and our humanitarian partners. Delays in loading the convoy resulted in a late departure from the warehouse, slowed further by long forced stops at checkpoints. After they sat for hours at the last Government of Syria checkpoint, the green light to remove the barriers and allow the trucks to cross was given only as evening approached. The security risk of waiting additional hours in the darkness while the barriers were removed was too great, so the decision was made to abort and return the next day. At that point, the convoy came under sniper fire as unknown gunmen lying in wait attacked. A Syrian Arab Red Crescent driver was hit and another grazed by sniper fire as the convoy began its return to Damascus.

I can report that, thankfully, the injured driver survived and is in stable condition. My thoughts and best wishes go out to him and his family. I condemn such acts in the strongest terms and call for accountability for those responsible. Those who deliberately direct attacks against humanitarian workers are committing war crimes.

The impact of the shots fired goes beyond any single person. They are an attack on the entire humanitarian community and, ultimately, a clear effort to prevent the delivery of aid to those in need. The safety of humanitarians going about their work is critical because in so many parts of Syria, they are the only lifeline for survival for communities trapped, injured and deprived by the conflict.

Changes in the access landscape have been shaped by the signing of local agreements between the Government of Syria and non-State armed opposition groups. These are agreements reached without the involvement of the United Nations. While the result of these agreements often means increased freedom of movement, commercial access and greater humanitarian access, they should not be viewed as entirely positive developments. They usually also include the relocation of those who fear reprisal or conscription, often to areas where they face serious security and protection concerns.

As a result of these changes, two towns have been removed from the list of besieged locations. The first is the town of Madaya, in rural Damascus. Following an agreement reached as part of the negotiations regarding the objectionable tit-for-tat arrangements for the four towns of Fo'ah, Kafraya, Madaya and Zabadani, access has improved in Madaya. The United Nations was able to conduct an assessment visit on 8 June, and the 25,000 to 30,000 civilians who remain in the town are now able to move in and out of the town by public transportation or private vehicle.

Secondly, the Al-Waer district of Homs city, where I visited, across the line, in December 2015, is also being removed from the besieged list. After reaching a local agreement in March, more than 19,000 individuals moved from the area to Idlib, Jarabulus and northern rural Homs. On 20 May, the Governor of Homs announced that the evacuation process was completed and that the area was again under Government of Syria control. As a result, access to the area has also been reopened, and the United Nations, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and non-governmental organizations are able to deliver to the area, in which an estimated 17,500 individuals remain.

There are now 11 besieged locations, with a total population of 540,000. Of these, seven are besieged by the Government of Syria, one by both the Government of Syria and non-State armed opposition groups, two by non-State armed opposition groups and one by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). I call once again for safe, unhindered and sustained access to all those in need, in particular for these 540,000 people, who are trapped and desperate for our assistance.

Notwithstanding the access challenges that remain in Syria, I would also like to acknowledge an important positive development on access. Earlier this month, WFP was able to successfully deploy a convoy of trucks from Aleppo, through Manbij and to Qamishli, in Al-Hasakah governorate. This is a key development, as

it will allow us to deliver at scale to north-east Syria, an area that has been short of supplies since the closure of the cross-border access point with Turkey in December 2015. While we have been able to deliver assistance via an air bridge from Damascus, the operation was expensive. The annual savings from moving the mode of delivery from air to land are equivalent to the cost of providing food aid for 100,000 people for one year. And as needs increase, we should now be able to deliver at scale.

This is particularly important with growing needs in north-east Syria due to anti-ISIL operations in the area. We have reports of civilian deaths by air strikes in the region, including one that resulted in the deaths of a reported 59 people, leaving another 70 wounded, in Abu Kamal, in eastern Deir ez-Zor governorate, on 15 May. At the same time, civilians in these areas face continued threats from ISIL. The air strike in Abu Kamal was followed by reported retributive attacks by ISIL against those whom they accused of providing coordinates.

We have similar concerns in Raqqa city, where on 6 June the Syrian Democratic Forces, supported by coalition forces, began an operation to take the city from ISIL, and in the past few days have fully encircled it. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights said yesterday that at least 173 people had reportedly been killed by air and ground strikes since 1 June. Conditions inside the city are reported to be dire, with limited access to food, water and basic services. While nearly 25,000 people have fled since the latest phase of operations began, the number of those remaining in the city is estimated to be between 50,000 and 100,000. People fleeing fighting in Raqqa face a variety of risks, including punitive measures by ISIL, threats posed by mine contamination, family separation, forced recruitment at checkpoints and concerns for the displaced who enter camps and whose identification is taken away or withheld and their movement restricted. People are terrified and do not know where to go for safety. We must do more to see that the civilians who are caught up in this fight are protected. I am sure that members can imagine being caught up, through no fault of one's own, not knowing what decision to make, and especially what decision to make for one's children.

The United Nations and its humanitarian partners are responding to the needs of those who leave as part of its broader response in the north-eastern region. Between 8 and 15 June, food assistance was delivered to more than 94,000 people, while 24 tons of medicine were dispatched to hospitals in Al-Hasakah and Qamishli towns, as well as to camps in Mabrouka, Ayn Issa and Al-Karama in Raqqa and Al-Hasakah governorates.

The signing, on 4 May, of a memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas created an opportunity to improve the situation of many civilians in Syria. It is critical to ensure that de-escalation succeeds and that we can see a sustained calm in those areas. The temporary reduction of violence in some areas is a positive development. However, others are seeing not just continued fighting but even an increase. I am particularly concerned about the situation in Daraa, where intense aerial bombardment and fighting has resulted in civilian deaths and further damage to civilian infrastructure. The fighting is also getting close to the southern border and has resulted in delays to some cross-border humanitarian shipments from Jordan. Despite the insecurity that has caused delays, the United Nations and its partners have been able to continue cross-border deliveries to those in need. As we sit comfortably around this table, however, we should never underestimate the sheer courage it takes for the humanitarian aid workers there on the ground to persist with such deliveries. We owe them protection, as well as our limitless thanks and financial support.

I should also highlight the fact that we are delivering aid to those in the Berm and have now reached 75 per cent of the population at Ruqban since the second cycle started, in early May. Our access to both Berm areas is in large part owed to the strong support we receive from the Government of Jordan. I would like to thank the Jordanian authorities for their positive collaboration. I look forward to their increased support in ensuring that lifesaving assistance continues to be delivered to the people in need. As the United Nations and humanitarian partners are working on the ground to reach those people, I remain hopeful that the results of next week's meeting in Astana on de-escalation will bring about a positive development and see a sustained reduction in the fighting and, along with that, improved and unhindered humanitarian access to these areas.

In conclusion, I repeat my call to the Council to act now to protect civilians. I urge those sitting around this table who are active in the conflict to fully incorporate the protection of civilians into their military planning, and those with influence on the parties to the conflict to prioritize the protection of civilians in all engagements with them. These are legal obligations under the laws of war, and they should not be bent, broken or avoided.

Accountability is key and, of course, wherever possible, evidence is being collected, photographed, documented, preserved and stored for use in the appropriate courts in due course — preferably soon, so as to deter the continued flagrant and even blasé disregard for life and the law that we are seeing. I therefore call on all Council members to do more to ensure humanitarian access, thereby enabling us to reach those in need. While the besieged population's numbers have once again decreased, their needs remain great, and those who have moved to other hard-to-reach areas continue to require our urgent and sustained support as well.

Immediate steps must be taken to preclude further attacks on humanitarian workers. That is not solely a matter of humanitarian protection; it is about ensuring that those in need can continue to be reached. One important step in that regard is to end the bureaucratic delays that leave convoys vulnerable because they are waiting at checkpoints or operating at night. Another is to ensure there is no impunity for such attacks. I also urge those with influence to identify and, where possible, help to secure the release of the 29 United Nations staff members who are missing or detained in Syria.

Finally, and most important, we need to see a sustained reduction in violence, which is so necessary for progress on any front. Ending the fighting will ease the burden on civilians and create an environment conducive to assistance. Now is the time. It was the time last month, the month before and the year before. More delay, hauntingly, means more deaths, and more people maimed, more injured and more scarred in body and mind for the rest of their time on Earth. Will I be saying the same thing next month? Yes, if we sit on our hands or wring them impotently. This problem is in the Council's hands — but together, and jointly. I would urge Council members to hold one another's hands. Let us not just say "no more". In the name of humanity, let us deliver no more death for Syrians.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. O'Brien for his briefing.

The representative of Uruguay has asked for the floor to make a statement.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first like to thank Mr. O'Brien once again for his comprehensive briefing and for the years he has put in at the helm of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), working with unceasing courage at his humanitarian task, which we would like to highlight and for which we are deeply grateful. We are also grateful to his entire team, particularly the humanitarian workers on the ground, who risk their lives to bring aid to the civilians in need.

We condemn the recent attack of 17 June and would like to express our solidarity with the Syrian Red Cross staff who were injured. It is hard to understand how it can be that months and years have passed while we have continued to witness the frustration of OCHA, unable to carry out its mandated task because of security issues — or, even more incomprehensibly, owing to the refusal of the Government itself to authorize it. That is not a failure on OCHA's part, or for United Nations institutions generally, but it is a failure for the Security Council, which has not been able to influence the parties to the Syrian conflict — and by whom I mean all of the actors in the conflict — to change their attitude and enable relatively normal access for humanitarian aid and its regular delivery.

We in this Chamber are so accustomed to discussing this subject that we can forget the fact that this is a human tragedy that Syria has been enduring since 2011 — not just for the millions of refugees and displaced persons that the conflict has created, but also for the hundreds of thousands who have died or been wounded and for the destruction that has been inflicted on the country and that will take decades to rebuild. As usual, it is the most vulnerable who are most affected, including women, children and the elderly.

The protection of civilians in Syria has merely been vapid rhetoric that all parties to the conflict have continued to disregard and violate. The goals for Syria have been clearly defined and must be gradually achieved in order to be able to offer the Syrian people a future full of promise, after so many years of savagery. The first goal is, and must continue to be, achieving a political solution that would end the crisis and lead to a peaceful transition in Syria. The solution must be negotiated by all Syrians and backed by the international community. We trust that the good offices of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, will bring us closer to that goal.

In addition to the Geneva talks, the Astana process is also necessary for reducing the level of violence in Syria and, fortunately, the process has been yielding positive results. We support the efforts of the three guarantor countries and we believe that progress can

be made next week to consolidate the ceasefire so that the seventh round of Geneva talks with the parties can commence in a positive atmosphere.

Almost two months after the signing of the memorandum that established the safe zones, we have yet to receive official information on the implementation of that agreement. We are concerned about the fact that, to date, the United Nations has not been granted unhindered access to those areas. That would give some indication that the essential principles of international humanitarian law are being respected, such as humanitarian access, the prohibition of forced displacement, and freedom of movement, so that people can freely enter and leave those areas. The political process and the cessation of hostilities are only two of the ways to ensure that Syria begins a new chapter.

The third, equally important, issue continues to be the humanitarian dimension. We are still far from an encouraging outcome that could alleviate the suffering of the civilian population in Syria. Once again, we call for immediate, sustained and unhindered access to all besieged and hard-to-reach areas. However, our main goal must be to lift the unjustifiable and abhorrent siege on those areas.

For Uruguay, the protection of civilians in Syria and in any other conflict is the top priority. It is immoral to target civilians because they support one or other of the parties or because they find themselves in a certain area that is controlled by one or other of the parties. Delivering justice for the hundreds of thousands of innocent victims in the conflict is essential to achieving lasting peace in Syria and for the country and its entire population to overcome the horrors of the war.

Uruguay supported the establishment of an international impartial and independent mechanism to investigate crimes committed in Syria and hopes that it can begin its work shortly. We also support the request of Secretary-General António Guterres for the situation in Syria to be referred to the International Criminal Court.

Despite the adoption, one year ago, of resolution 2286 (2016), we continue to bear witness to the destruction of hospitals and health centres in Syria, which proves that the parties to the conflict have disregarded the resolution's provisions, thereby depriving thousands of people of their right to medical attention and leading to hundreds of victims among medical and health-care personnel. That is in serious violation of international humanitarian law and amounts to war crimes. The practice is also carried out on schools, markets and all kinds of civilian infrastructure. We condemn such attacks in Syria, Yemen and in any other place where they occur.

In conclusion, Uruguay underscores that the full and effective implementation of measures to ensure the cessation of hostilities, the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure and the facilitation of administrative procedures to allow for humanitarian access can, and must, make a major difference in the lives of the Syrian people, who, month after month, demand that the Security Council take concrete action. It is therefore imperative that that commitment be honoured as soon as possible. We trust that, as has occurred on previous occasions, the Council can overcome its differences and assume its responsibility in order to guarantee international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.05 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7988

Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

7988th meeting
Thursday, 29 June 2017, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Llorentty Soliz	(Bolivia (Plurinational State of))
Members:	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Egypt	Mr. Moustafa
	Ethiopia	Mr. Woldegerima
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Italy	Mr. Cardi
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	Ukraine	Mr. Shutenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mrs. Haley
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

The situation in Libya

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. *Corrections* should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

17-18866 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Libya

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Libya to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of item two of its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2017/548, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2362 (2017).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Moustafa (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Egypt voted in favour of resolution 2362 (2017). My delegation would like to make the following comments.

First, in connection with enforcing the ban on the illicit exports of oil and oil products, the parties concerned should depend upon sound information in order to avoid any diversion. That should be a precondition before the Sanctions Committee takes any measures.

Secondly, in relation to the breifing submitted by the Libyan focal point regarding the arms embargo according to paragraph 6 of resolution 2278 (2016), we expect a response to the additional inquiries that might be submitted by the Sanctions Committee on the contents of that briefing.

Thirdly, with regard to the general political and security situation in Libya, we welcome the appointment of Mr. Ghassan Salamé as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Libya. We are completely ready to cooperate closely with him for the success of his mission. In that regard, we would like to refer to the importance of sparing no effort and quickly convening the meeting of the committee made up of members of Parliament and the High Council of the State to ammend the political framework, which is the only way towards a settlement in Libya. In that vein, Egypt emphasizes that, according to the Libyan Political Agreement, the Parliament remains the only body mandated to endorse any ammendments that are to be introduced to the Agreement, and it is the body that is in charge of adopting any new configurations of the Government of National Accord.

Furthermore, I would like to reiterate that it is important to lift the embargo imposed on the supply of arms to the Libyan national army, as that is the only entity with the mandate to counter terrorism in Libya. It should serve as the nucleus for any Libyan armed forces that are to be constituted in Libya in the future.

In conclusion, we hope that 2017 will be the year of the restoration of peace and stability to our sisterly country Libya.

Mr. Wilson (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom welcomes the Security Council's unanimous agreement on the technical rollover of United Nations Libya sanctions. In particular, we welcome the fact that the Council has decided has decided to extend the measures against illicit oil exports to include other types of petroleum, to help address a significant problem. Libya's Attorney General has said that the smuggling of fuel has cost Libya LD500 million Libyan dinars, which is nearly $370 million. It is absolutely right that the Council has acted to address that issue.

We have also heard a legitimate concern on the part of the Government of National Accord regarding the risk that assets frozen under sanctions can depreciate in value. We agree that further work needs to be done on that issue. But the United Kingdom continues to think that Libya's resources must be preserved and protected for the benefit of the Libyan people, in line

with paragraph 12 of resolution 2362 (2017), which we adopted today. Sanctions remain an important tool for the Council in our work to support the Government of National Accord and to stabilize Libya. However, they can ever be only one part of the solution, which requires full political reconciliation.

We reiterate our support to the Presidency Council and the Government of National Accord, headed by Prime Minister Serraj, as the legitimate executive authorities under the Libyan Political Agreement, in line with resolution 2259 (2015). We therefore welcome the briefing provided to the Sanctions Committee on the security forces under the control of the Government of National Accord. We continue to encourage the Council to take a supportive approach to arms embargo exemption requests in order to provide essential assistance to the humanitarian and stabilization efforts.

It is important that all Member States cease supporting parallel institutions and groups that are acting outside of the authority of the internationally recognized Government. The Council needs to be ready to take swift action against spoilers who continue to obstruct the peace, stability and security in Libya, including parallel institutions. We condemn those responsible for the attack yesterday on a convoy of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya.

We continue to support all efforts to reach a more inclusive political settlement within the framework of the Libyan Political Agreement. We welcome the appointment of new Special Representative Ghassan Salamé, which is an opportunity to build real momentum towards that goal. We will continue to work with the Presidency Council and the Government of National Accord to support their efforts to deliver for the people of Libya.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Libya.

Mr. Elmajerbi (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to speak following the adoption of resolution 2362 (2017), in relation to the renewal of the sanctions regime initiated in 2011. In that context, I take this opportunity to welcome the appointment of Mr. Ghassan Salamé as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and to wish him every success in achieving consensus among the Libyan parties in implementing the Libyan Political Agreement in such a way as to ensure the establishment of security and stability and the strengthening of institutions. I also thank Mr. Martin Kobler for his efforts as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

With respect to the resolution just adopted, I welcome certain paragraphs related to the renewal of the mandate of the Panel of Experts and the paragraph related to the prevention of illicit oil exports and refined oil products. However I express my country's deepest regret and huge disappointment that the resolution ignores the amendment of the sanctions regime related to the Libyan Investment Authority, which is incurring substantial losses due to this regime, in accordance with resolutions 1970 (2011), 1973 (2011) and 2009 (2011), which stipulate an assets freeze of the Libyan Investment Authority and which were formulated without considering the potential long-term effects of those resolutions on the actual value of assets. Under those resolutions, the assets freeze of the Libyan Investment Authority has caused its portfolio and related entities great financial loss, equal to more than $1 billion annually, according to the calculations and estimates of the Authority. Those losses are unjustified and, in certain cases, have enriched foreign financial institutions that are considered to be the custodians of those assets, at the expense of the Libyan people. If that is not immediately and definitively addressed, it will eventually lead to the erosion of all of the resources of the Libyan Investment Authority.

Our disappointment and deep regret regarding the resolution's failure to amend the sanctions regime related to frozen assets are due to the fact that we notified the Security Council, both formally and informally, more than one year ago, about the extent of the catastrophe threatening the frozen assets. We requested that certain amendments should be introduced in order to improve the management of the frozen assets and to avoid the continuous depreciation that is afflicting the same since 2011. However, all of our requests have fallen on deaf ears. I would refer to those requests briefly, as follows.

First, we formally informed the Security Council of the huge loss to those assets through a letter from the Permanent Mission of Libya to the United Nations, on 21 March 2016 (S/2016/275). The letter also included a suggestion of paragraphs to be included in the sanctions regime. However our fair and logical requests were totally ignored. The Security Council adopted resolution 2278 (2016) without those amendments.

Secondly, in the same letter we referred to the report of the Panel of Experts on Libya (see S/2016/209) submitted to the Security Council on 3 March 2016, which addressed the issue. Paragraph 257 of the report states:

> "It was clearly not the aim of the Security Council that the investments should be diminished, meaning that this matter needs to be clarified, preferably by including an explicit exemption for fund management in a future resolution".

Recommendation 8 provides:

> "[t]o explicitly allow and encourage the reinvestment of assets frozen under the measures, in consultation with the Government of Libya, in order to protect the value of investments of designated individuals and entities."

However, despite the explicit and clear recommendation on the part of the Panel of Experts, the Security Council has taken no steps to amend the sanctions regime, a matter that is causing the ongoing depreciation of the assets and funds of the Libyan people.

Thirdly, during the past year and before the adoption of resolution 2278 (2016), a team from the Permanent Mission of Libya, in coordination with a number of experts from the Libyan Investment Authority, has provided explanatory notes regarding all of the adverse effects and impacts on the frozen assets. This occurred in bilateral meetings with members of the Security Council, during which the team also proposed certain minor amendments to the sanctions regime to improve management of frozen assets.

Fourthly, a team from the Permanent Mission of Libya and experts from the Libyan Investment Authority have convened a number of meetings with the members of the Security Council since the beginning of 2017, with the aim of reminding members and the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011) of the continuous attrition of Libya's assets due to the sanctions imposed since 2011, with the hope that the issue would be taken into consideration in the draft resolution to be adopted in July. Unfortunately, today we were surprised to find that resolution 2362 (2017) was adopted under a silence procedure during a holiday without consulting the Libyan Mission and with no regard to our fair requests for amending the sanctions regime or to our correspondence related to this issue.

Fifthly, in our 7 June statement (see S/PV.7961) we alluded explicitly to the losses sustained by our frozen assets and reminded the Council of the severity of the problem. We also noted that, when the assets freeze was introduced, it was not meant to punish Libya, but rather as a precautionary measure against the misuse and waste of those assets during the revolution and the transitional period after the fall of the previous regime. We asserted that the Libyan authorities were not requesting that the assets freeze be lifted but simply that its funds be deposited in certain accounts or reinvested, and that accounts be allowed to be opened or closed. However, most unfortunately, our request once again fell on deaf ears.

Sixthly, a new letter on that issue was submitted to the President of the Security Council on 26 June by the Permanent Mission of Libya to the United Nations in order to remind the Council of the heavy losses incurred since 2011 due to the sanctions regime. We requested swift intervention and amendments to the sanctions renewal resolution, citing paragraph 11 of resolution 2278 (2016) regarding the assets freeze, and which refers to the Council taking note of the letter from Libyan Mission circulated as document S/2016/275 . That paragraph

> "affirms the Security Council's readiness to consider changes, when appropriate, to the asset freeze at the request of the Government of National Accord".

We affirmed that this is a formal request made by the Government of National Accord.

We also submitted a letter from His Excellency Mr. Fayiz al-Sarraj, head of the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord, requesting that the Council take speedy and immediate action to put an end to the decline and erosion in assets of the Libyan people, originally allocated for the future generations. However, and this is very unfortunate, the Council did not heed either letter despite the fact that they were both submitted before the silence procedure. The letter from the Mission was circulated before the deadline, but the letter from the head of the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord was not circulated until after the silence procedure had ended. Additionally, and this is very unfortunate, no Council member moved to extend the consultation period — not even for a few days — in order to review and consider

both letters before the final drafting of resolution 2363 (2017) to extend the sanctions regime.

Accordingly, my delegation was astonished by this repeated and deliberate ignoring of its fair, essential and urgent request for amending the sanctions regime related to frozen assets, which was intended not as punishment but as a precautionary measure to preserve and protect the assets from being wasted during the transitional period. The current situation runs totally counter to the primary objective for which the assets freeze was imposed. It is a huge waste of the wealth of the Libyan people in the very difficult conditions under which they are living.

While introducing those facts and our urgent and necessary request to the Council today, I would like to remind the Council of its ethical, legal and professional responsibility to put an end to the losses and depreciation, which could well totally eliminate the assets belonging to the sovereign wealth fund of the Libyan people if the sanctions regime, which has been in place since 2011, is maintained. I would also remind the Council of its repeated assurance, through resolutions and statements related to the Libyan situation, that it is eager to help Libya and protect its resources. In that regard, let me ask: Is there any assistance greater or more important than amending the sanctions regime to safeguard the wealth of Libyan people?

After more than a year since our initial alert to the Council of this disastrous situation, which the Council did has taken no action to address and which has caused the frozen assets additional losses of more than $1 billion during the past year, I reiterate the official request of the Presidency Council that the sanctions regime regarding assets freeze be amended as soon as possible in order to save the remaining assets and funds belonging to the Libyan Investment Authority. There is no justification whatsoever for ignoring our fair, urgent and necessary request. We stand ready to cooperate with the experts from the Libyan Investment Authority to provide the Council with explanations and to respond to all inquiries, leading to the expedited amendment of the sanctions regime regarding the frozen assets. The Council should therefore adopt a draft resolution to address this problem and to end the loss and avoiding further loss.

In conclusion, we are confident that our fair, urgent and repeated request to amend the sanctions regime will be considered positively by the Council so as to allow the regime to attain its goal of protecting and preserving the frozen assets the Libyan people.

The meeting rose at 3.25 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7989

Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

7989th meeting
Thursday, 29 June 2017, 3.30 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Llorentty Solíz	(Bolivia (Plurinational State of))
Members:	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Egypt	Mr. Moustafa
	Ethiopia	Ms. Guadey
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Italy	Mr. Cardi
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Ciss
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	Ukraine	Mr. Shutenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mrs. Haley
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2017/437)

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17-18860 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2017/437)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Sudan to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2017/513, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2017/437, which contains the special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2363 (2017).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Wilson (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom welcome the unanimous adoption of resolution 2363 (2017) today. I thank all members of the Security Council for their support over the past week since we began work to update the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

This resolution makes important changes to the mission. We have done that because the Council has a responsibility to respond to changes on the ground. Whether in Darfur or anywhere else, our missions must be mandated to work in the world as it is today and not just how it once was, and that is what this resolution achieves. We recognize that the Council must make changes sensibly and responsibly. That is why the text of the resolution ensures that UNAMID will remain able to deliver the core task of its mandate — protecting civilians from harm. In the coming days and weeks, we will be monitoring the impact of those changes to UNAMID's mandate. The resolution increases the frequency of reporting from 90 to 60 days and includes an assessment after six months, which must consider the impact of the changes on the ground.

This is a joint endeavour. The Government of the Sudan also bears responsibility in making these changes work. It is vital that they step up, that they let the mission operate and that they fill the gaps following UNAMID's withdrawal. Cooperation between the Government and the mission has improved. We now need to see that positive trajectory continue. The Council will be monitoring that closely as the changes are implemented.

In conclusion, let me assure those outside this Chamber that we recognize that the situation in Darfur remains fragile. Nevertheless, we cannot shy away from the fact that the situation has evolved and that it is right that UNAMID be adapted so as to reflect the current reality. We will not be taking our eyes off Darfur. The continuation of UNAMID under a new mandate, with more oversight from the Council, demonstrates our commitment both to the people of Darfur and to the region.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Mohamed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me to express our thanks and appreciation to all the members of the Security Council, with whom we have been communicating since the United Kingdom first proposed resolution 2263 (2017), which extends the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). I should also like to extend my thanks to the Secretary-General and to the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for their recommendations in their joint report (S/2017/437) on UNAMID.

Developments in the five states of Darfur over the past reporting periods cannot be denied or overlooked. We have consistently conveyed in all our statements and letters to the Security Council and to the Secretary-General that, since 2015, Darfur has been enjoying great security and stability, and that the humanitarian situation is completely stable. In assessing the political, humanitarian and security situation in Darfur, we do not rely on documents that have been produced for various forums. We possess sufficient evidence of our own in that regard. We fully rely on the reality on the ground, which was acknowledged by the Council in resolution 2340 (2017), adopted in February. This continuous improvement prompted our Government to call on the Secretary-General to develop and implement a progressive and phased withdrawal strategy

Darfur today is completely devoid of any armed groups, which had wreaked havoc in Darfur beginning in 2003. The military operations of the Sudanese Armed Forces and other actors launched in May have shielded Darfur against all attempts threatening security and peace there. We therefore stress our readiness, through our various institutions, to protect the security and the stability of our citizens and safeguard our gains.

As members know, the international community has been sharing a great burden with us in the Sudan so as to consolidate internal peace. We had therefore hoped that the resolution would stress the holding of an international donor conference on Darfur as recommended by the African Union Council for Peace and Security on 12 June, so as to complement the donor conference held in Doha in April 2013.

The rebel forces' attempts to undermine security and stability in Darfur through planning attacks on the northern, western and southern borders must not be repeated. Such attacks remain the only threat to peace in Darfur.

Members will have noted our efforts to make the resolution coherent and responsive to the situation on the ground in Darfur today. That is reflected in the special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic review. In fact, it focused on the return of peace and security in Darfur. The very clear statement issued on 12 June by the African Union Peace and Security Council highlighted the same conclusions reached during our consultations with all of the members of the Security Council. We stress the fact that resolution 2363 (2017) to renew the mission's mandate was adopted by consensus. Allow me to take this opportunity to thank all of the members of the Council for giving us the time to explain our position.

The difficulties faced by our Government to restore stability and security in the region requires immediate action by the international community to provide support in all its forms to solve the problem. We have reminded the Council, time and again, that our Government has designed a three-phase plan to address the issue of displacement and that it requires the support of the international community. I would also like to point out that there is some confusion about the definition of the term "displacement". That term, which is familiar to all, does not apply to the majority of displaced people in Darfur. Those people are now productive members of society and do not require urgent humanitarian assistance. With a bit of effort, we can turn displaced people who were formerly in need into a productive labour force that supports our economy.

We are all well aware of the importance of providing UNAMID with the capacity for mobility and access after the Council mandated a 44 per cent drawdown of Operation forces so that the mission could shoulder its responsibility effectively. I therefore stress our determination and readiness, through all our institutions, to cooperate with UNAMID and enable it to fully deliver on its mandate. The sacrifices and efforts made by UNAMID in Darfur to anchor peace and stability have always been appreciated by our people. This uniquely structured mission has contributed to the return of normalcy and security in Darfur, which were made possible by the great efforts of its soldiers.I would also like to thank all the troop- and police-contributing countries that assisted in carrying out the mandate.

I hope, Mr. President, that the Council will heed my words when it comes to this important phase of

implementing the mission's exit strategy, which is clearly based upon the return of security and peace in Darfur.

With regard to the ongoing review to be conducted in short intervals, I believe that justice and fairness call for that review to be completely transparent. It must include the participation of the Joint Special Representative of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and the two mechanisms that were established and agreed upon — the Joint Working group and the Tripartite Mechanism. On this occasion, I should like to express my support for resolution 2363 (2017) and would like to thank His Excellency Ambassador Kingsley Mamabolo, Joint Special Representative and Head of the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel.

In conclusion, the Security Council, the main organ with the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, has the right to celebrate today's joint achievement. It was initiated by my Government, which played a major role by prioritizing its responsibility to protect civilians, while preserving our national sovereignty. At this very difficult time, marked by heightened regional tensions, desertification, the spread of small arms and light weapons, human trafficking and terrorist attacks, we must commend what has been achieved.

The African Union has reaped the fruit of its efforts. It has paid great attention to the issue of peace and security on the continent. We may recall the wisdom of the Government of the Sudan, prior to the adoption of resolution 1769 (2007), when it sought to make the peacekeeping mission a United Nations-African Union hybrid mission, with Africa making the greatest contribution. The African component of the mission constitutes the majority of the peacekeeping force.

Once again, we reiterate our gratitude to you, Sir, and, through you, to all of the members of the Council. I underscore that we will remain committed to serving the cause of peace in my country and throughout the world.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.